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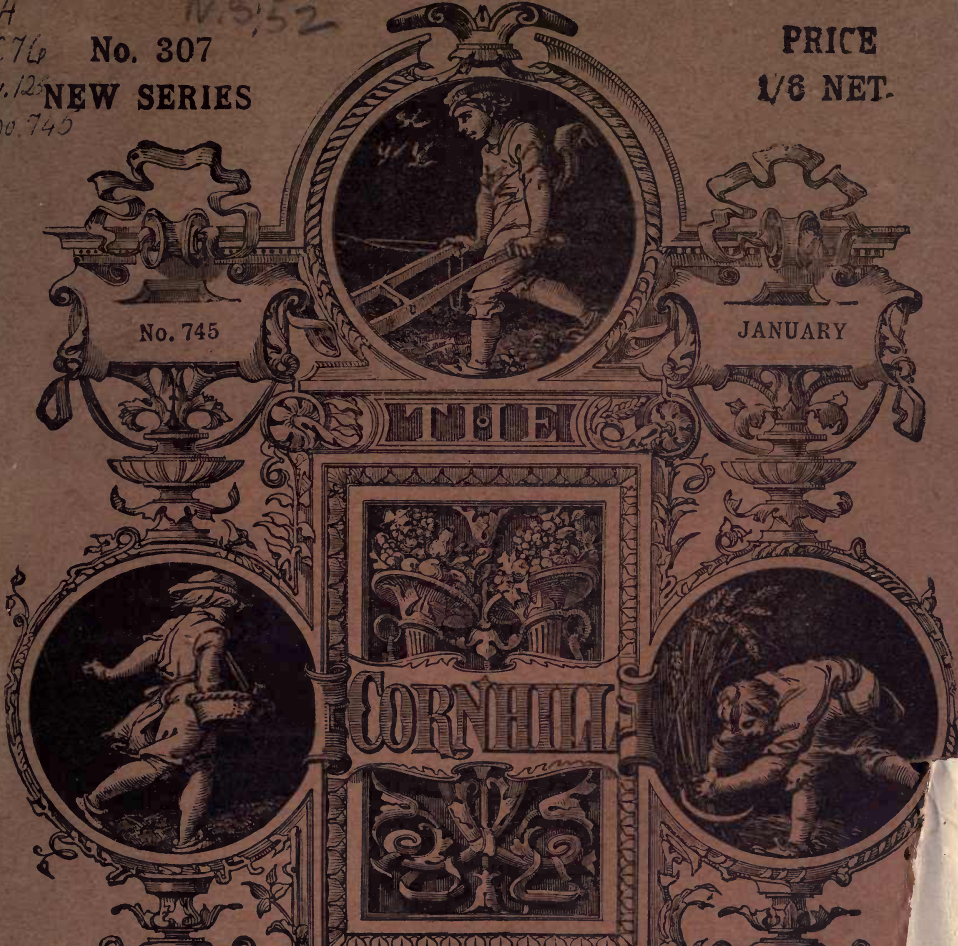

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JANUARY

THE CORNHILL MAGAZINE

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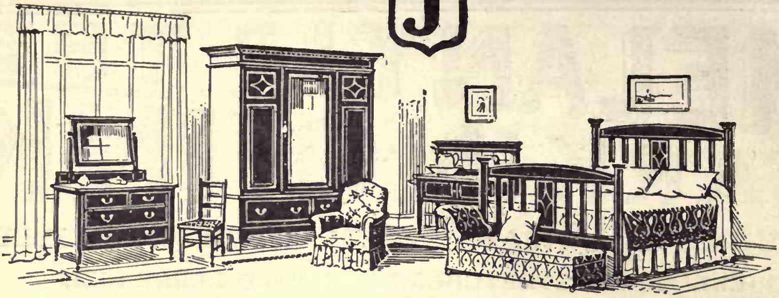

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JANUARY 1922.

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THE
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JANUARY 1922.

OVINGTON'S BANK.

BY STANLEY J. WEYMAN.

CHAPTER I.

It was market day at Aldersbury, the old county town of Aldshire, and the busiest hour of the day. The clock of St. Juliana's was on the point of striking three, and the streets below it were thronged. The gentry, indeed, were beginning to take themselves homeward; a carriage and four, with postillions in yellow jackets, awaited its letters before the Post Office, and near at hand a red-wheeled tandem-cart, the horses tossing their small, keen heads, hung on the movements of its master, who was gossiping on the steps of Ovington's Bank, on Bride Hill. But only the vans bound to the more distant valleys had yet started on their lagging journey; the farmers' gigs, the hucksters' carts, the pack-asses still lingered, filling the streets with a chattering, moving multitude. White-coated yeomen and their wives jostled their betters—but with humble apologies—in the low-browed shops, or hardily pushed smocked-frocks from the narrow pavements, or clung together in obstinate groups in the roadway. Loud was the babel about the yards of the inns, loudest where the tap-rooms poured forth those who, having dined well, had also drunk deep, after the fashion of our great-grandsires.

Through all this medley and hubbub a young man threaded his way. He wore a blue coat with gilt buttons, a waistcoat to match, and drab trousers, and as he hurried along, his hat tilted back, he greeted gentle and simple with the same laughing nod. He had the carriage of one who had a fixed position in the world and knew his worth; and so attractive was his smile, so gallant his confidence, that liking ran before him, and half of the faces that he encountered mirrored his good humour. As he passed along the High Street, and skirted the Market Place, where the quaint stone figure of an ancient Prince, great in his day, looked down on the turmoil from the front of the Market House, he glanced up at the clock, noted the imminence of the hour, and quickened his pace.

A man touched him on the sleeve. 'Mr. Bourdillon, sir,' he said, trying to stop him, 'by your leave, I want to——'

'Not now. Not now, Broadway,' the young man answered quickly. 'I'm meeting the mail.' And before the other had fairly taken in his words he was a dozen paces away, now slipping deftly between two lurching farmers, now coasting about the more obstinate groups.

A moment later St. Juliana's clock, hard put to it to raise its wheezy voice above the noise, struck the hour. The young man slackened his pace. He was in time, but only barely in time, for as he paused, the distant notes of the guard's bugle sprang like fairy music above the turbid current of sound and gave notice that the coach was at hand. Hurriedly gigs and carts drew aside, the crowd sought the pavements, the more sober drew the heedless out of danger, half a dozen voices cried 'Look out! Have a care!' and with a last shrill Tantivy! Tantivy! Tantivy! the four sweating bays, the leaders cantering, the wheelers trotting, the bars all taut, emerged from the crest of the steep Cop, and the Holyhead Mail, within a minute of its time, drew up before the door of the Lion, the Royal Arms shining bravely from its red panels.

Shop-keepers ran to their doors, the crowd closed up about it, the yokels gaped—for who in those days felt no interest in its advent! By that coach had come, eleven years before, the news of the abdication of the Corsican and the close of the Great War. Laurelled and flagged, it had thrilled the town a year afterwards with the tidings of Waterloo. Later it had signalled the death of the old blind king, and later still, the acquittal—as all the world regarded it—of Queen Caroline. Ah, how the crowd had cheered then! And how lustily old Squire Griffin of Garth, the great-uncle of this young man, now come to meet the mail, had longed to lay his cane about their disloyal shoulders!

The coachman, who had driven the eleven-mile stage from Haygate in fifty-eight minutes, unbuckled and flung down the reins. The guard thrust his bugle into its case, tossed a bundle of journals to the waiting boys, and stepped nimbly to the ground. The passengers followed more slowly, stamping their chilled feet, and stretching their cramped limbs. Some, who were strangers, looked about them with a travelled air, or hastened to the blazing fires that shone from the Lion windows, while two or three who were at their journey's end bustled about, rescuing shawls and portmanteaux, or dived into inner pockets for the coachman's fee.

The last to appear, a man, rather below the middle height, in a handsome caped travelling-coat, was in no hurry. He stepped out at his ease and found the young man who has been described at his side. 'That you, Arthur?' he said, his face lighting up. 'All well?'

'All well, sir. Let me take that!'

'Isn't Rodd here? Ah!' to a second young man, plainer, darker, and more soberly garbed, who had silently appeared at his forerunner's elbow. 'Take this, Rodd, will you?' handing him a small leather case. 'Don't let it go, until it is on my table. All well?'

'All well, sir, thank you.'

'Then go on at once, will you? I will follow with Mr. Bourdillon. Give me your arm, Arthur.' He looked about him as he spoke. One or two hats were lifted, he acknowledged the courtesy with a smile. 'Betty well?'

'You'll find her at the window looking out. All gone swimmingly, I hope, sir?'

'Swimmingly?' The traveller paused on the word, perhaps questioning its propriety; and he did not continue until they had disengaged themselves from the group round the coach. He and the young man came, though there was nothing to show this, from different grades of society, and the one was thirty years older than the other and some inches shorter. Yet there was a likeness. The lower part of the face in each was strong, and a certain brightness in the eyes, that was alertness in the younger man and keenness in the elder, told of a sanguine temperament; and they were both good-looking. 'Swimmingly?' the traveller repeated when they had freed themselves from their immediate neighbours. 'Well, if you choose to put it that way, yes. But, it's wonderful, wonderful,' in a lower tone, as he paused an instant to acknowledge an acquaintance, 'the state of things up there, my boy.'

'Still rising?'

'Rising as if things would never fall. And upon my word I don't know why, with the marvellous progress everything is making—but I'll tell you all that later. It's a full market. Is Acherley at the bank?'

'Yes, and Sir Charles. They came a little before time.'

'Clement is with them, I suppose?'

'Well, no, sir.'

'Don't say he's away to-day!' in a tone of vexation.

'I'm afraid he is,' Arthur admitted reluctantly. 'But they are all right. I offered Sir Charles the paper, but they preferred to wait outside.'

'D——n!' muttered the other, nodding right and left. 'Too bad of the boy! Too bad! No,' to the person who had lain in wait for Bourdillon and now put himself in their way, 'I can't stop now, Mr. Broadway.'

'But, Mr. Ovington! Just a——'

'Not now!' Ovington answered curtly. 'Call to-morrow.' And when they had left the man behind, 'What does he want?'

'What they all want,' Arthur answered, smiling. 'A good thing, sir.'

'But he isn't a customer.'

'No, but he will be to-morrow,' the young man rejoined. 'They are all agog. They've all got it that you can make a man's fortune by a word, and of course they want their fortunes made.'

'Ah!' the other ejaculated drily. 'But seriously, look about you, Arthur. Did you ever see a greater change in men's faces—from what they were this time two years? Even the farmers!'

'Well, they are doing well.'

'Better, at any rate. Better, even they. Yes, Mr. Wolley,' to a stout man, much wrapped up, who put himself in the way, 'follow us, please. Sir Charles is waiting. Better,' Ovington continued to his companion, as the man fell behind, 'and prices rising, and demand—demand spreading in everything.'

'Including Stocks?'

'Including Stocks. I've some news for Sir Charles, that, if he has any doubts about joining us, will fix him. Well, here we are, and I'm glad to be at home. We'll go in by the house door, Arthur, or Betty will be disappointed.'

The bank stood on Bride Hill, looking down the High Street. The position was excellent and the house good. Still, it was no more than a house, for in 1825 banks were not the institutions that they have since become; they had still for rivals the old stocking and the cracked teapot, and among banks, Ovington's at Aldersbury was neither of long standing nor of more than local repute.

Mr. Ovington led the way into the house, and had barely removed his hat when a girl flew down the wide oak staircase and flung herself upon him. 'Oh, father!' she cried. 'Here at last! Aren't you cold? Aren't you starving?'

'Pretty well for that,' he replied, stroking her hair in a way that proved that, whatever he was to others, he had a soft spot for his daughter. 'Pretty well for that, Betty.'

'Well, there's a good fire! Come and warm yourself!'

'That's what I can't do, my dear,' he said, taking off his great coat. 'Business first.'

'But I thought you had done all that in London?' pouting.

'Not all, but some. I shall be an hour, perhaps more.'

She shot a mutinous glance at Arthur. 'Why can't he do it? And Mr. Rodd?'

'You think we are old enough, Betty?'

'Apprentices should be seen, and not heard!' she snapped.

Arthur's position at the bank had been hardly understood at first, and in some fit of mischief, Betty, determined not to bow down to his pretensions, had christened him the 'Apprentice.'

'I thought that that proverb applied to children,' he retorted.

The girl was a beauty, dark and vivid, but small, and young enough to feel the gibe. Before she could retaliate, however, her father intervened. 'Where's Clement?' he asked. 'I know that he is not here.'

'Tell-tale!' she flung at Arthur. 'If you must know, father,' mildly, 'I think that he's——'

'Mooning somewhere, I suppose, instead of being in the bank, as he should be. And market day of all days! There, come, Bourdillon, I mustn't keep Sir Charles and Acherley waiting.' He led the way to the rear of the hall, where a door on the left led into the bank parlour. Betty made a face after them.

In the parlour which lay behind the public office were two men. One, seated in an arm-chair by the fire, was reading the *Morning Post*. The other was standing at the window, his very shoulders expressing his impatience. But it was to the former, a tall, middle-aged man, stiff and pompous, with thin sandy hair but kindly eyes, that Ovington made the first advance. 'I am sorry to have kept you waiting, Sir Charles,' he said. 'Very sorry. But I assure you I have not wasted a minute. Mr. Acherley,' to the other, 'pardon me, will you? Just a word with Sir Charles before we begin.'

And leaving Bourdillon to make himself agreeable to the impatient Acherley, Ovington drew Sir Charles Woosenham aside.

'I have gone a little beyond my instructions,' he said in a low tone, 'and sold your Monte Reales.'

The Baronet's face fell. 'Sold!' he ejaculated. 'Parted with them? But I never—my dear sir, I never——'

'Authorised a sale?' the banker agreed suavely. 'No, perfectly right, Sir Charles. But I was on the spot and I felt myself responsible. There was a favourable turn and—' forestalling the other as he would have interrupted—'my rule is little and sure—little and sure, and sell on a fair rise. I don't think you will be dissatisfied with the transaction.'

But Sir Charles's displeasure showed itself in his face. He was a man of family and influence, honourable and straightforward, but his abilities were hardly on a par with his position, and though he had at times an inkling of the fact it only made him the more jealous of interference. 'But I never contemplated,' he said, the blood rising to his face, 'never for a moment, that you would part with the stocks without reference to me, Mr. Ovington.'

'Precisely, precisely—without your authority, Sir Charles—except at a really good profit. I think that four or five hundred was mentioned? Just so. Well, if you will look at this draft, which of course includes the price of the stocks—they cost, if I remember, fourteen hundred or thereabouts—you will, I hope,—I really hope—approve of what I did.'

Sir Charles adjusted his glasses, and frowned at the paper. He was prepared to be displeased and to show it. 'Two thousand six hundred,' he muttered, 'two thousand six hundred and twenty-seven!' his jaw dropping in his surprise. 'Two thousand six—really! Ah, well, I certainly think—' with a quick change to cordiality that would have amused an onlooker—'that you acted for the best. I am obliged to you, much obliged, Mr. Ovington. A handsome profit.'

'I felt sure that you would approve,' the banker assented gravely. 'Shall Bourdillon put the draft—Arthur, be good enough to place this draft to Sir Charles Woosenham's account. And tell Mr. Wolley and Mr. Grounds—I think they are waiting—to come in. I ask your pardon, Mr. Acherley,' approaching him in turn.

'No plum for me, I suppose?' growled that gentleman, whom the gist of the interview with Sir Charles had not escaped. He was a tall, hatchet-faced, dissipated-looking man, of an old family, Acherley of Acherley. He had been a dandy with Brummell, had shaken his elbow at Watier's when Crockford managed it, had dined at the Pavilion; now he vegetated in the country on a mortgaged estate, and on Sundays attended cock-fights behind the village public-house.

'Well, not to-day,' Ovington answered pleasantly. 'But when we have shaken the tree a little——'

'One may fall, you think?'

'I hope so. You will be unlucky if one does not.'

The two men who had been summoned came in, each after his fashion. Wolley entered first, endeavouring to mask under a swaggering manner his consciousness that he stood in the presence of his betters. A clothier from the Valleys and one of Ovington's earliest customers, he had raised himself, as the banker had, and from the same stratum; but by enlarging instead of selling his mill. During the war he had made much money and had come to attribute his success a little more to his abilities and a little less to circumstances than was the fact. Of late there were whispers that in the financial storm of '16, which had followed the close of the war, he had come near the rocks; but if so he had put a bold face on the crisis, and by an assertive manner and by steadily putting himself forward he had impressed most men with a belief in his wealth. 'Afternoon, Sir Charles,' he grunted with as much ease as he could compass. 'Afternoon,' to Acherley. He took a seat at the table and slapped down his hat. He was here on business and he meant to show that he knew what business was.

Grounds, who followed, was a man of a different type. He was a maltster and had been a dairyman; a leading tradesman in the town, cautious, penurious, timid, putting pound to pound without saying much about it, and owning that respect for his superiors which became one in his position. Until lately he had hoarded his savings, or put them into the five per cents.; he had distrusted even the oldest and most respectable bank. But progress was in the air, new enterprises, new discoveries were the talk of the town, the interest on the five per cents. had been reduced to four, and in a rare moment of rashness, he had taken a hint dropped by Ovington, had ventured, and won. He still trembled at his temerity, he still vowed in wakeful moments that he would return to the old safe road, but in the meantime easy gains tempted him and he was now fairly embarked on modern courses. He was a byword in Aldersbury for caution and shrewdness, and his adhesion to any scheme would, as Ovington well knew, commend it to the town.

He hung back, but, 'Come, Mr. Grounds, take a seat,' said the banker. 'You know Sir Charles and Mr. Acherley? Sir Charles, will you sit on my right, and Mr. Acherley here, if you please? Bourdillon, will you take a note? We are met, as you know, gentlemen, to consider the formation of a Joint Stock Company, to be called'—he consulted a paper—'the Valleys Steam Railroad Company, for the purpose of connecting the woollen business of the Valleys with the town, and of providing the public with a superior mode of transport. The Bill for the Manchester and Liverpool Railroad is on the point of passing, and that great enterprise is as good as carried through. The Bill for the London and Birmingham Railroad is before the House; a Bill for a line from Birmingham to Aldersbury is preparing. Those projects are, gentlemen, in stronger hands than ours, and it might seem to some to be too early to anticipate their success and to provide the continuation we propose. But nothing is more certain than that the spoils are to those who are first in the field. The Stockton and Darlington Railway is proving what can be done by steam in the transport of the heaviest goods. A single engine there draws a load of fifty tons at the rate of six miles an hour, and has been known to convey a load of passengers at fifteen miles. Higher speeds than these are thought to be possible——'

'I'll never believe it!' Wolley growled, anxious to assert himself.

'But not desirable,' Ovington continued blandly. 'At any rate, if we wait too long——'

'There's no talk of waiting!' Acherley exclaimed impatiently. Neither he nor Sir Charles was in the habit of meeting on an equal footing the men with whom they were sitting to-day; he found the position galling, and what was to be done he was anxious should be done quickly. He had heard the banker's exordium before.

'No, we are here to act,' Ovington assented, with one eye on Grounds, for whose benefit he had been talking. 'But on sober and well-considered lines. We are all agreed, I think, that such a railroad will be a benefit to the trade and district?'

Now, to this proposition not one of those present would have assented a year before. 'Steam railroads?' they would have cried, 'fantastic and impossible!' But the years 1823 and 1824 had been years not only of great prosperity but of abnormal progress. The seven lean years, the years of depression and repression, which had followed Waterloo had come to an end. The losses of war had been made good, and simultaneously a more liberal spirit had been infused into the Government. Men had breathed freely, had looked about them, had begun to hope and to venture, to talk of a new world. Demand had overtaken and outrun supply, large profits had been made, money had become cheap, and, fostered by credit, the growth of enterprise throughout the country had been marvellous. It was as if, after the frosts of winter, the south wind had blown and sleeping life had everywhere awakened. Men doubled their operations and still had money to spare. They put the money in the funds—the funds rose until they paid no more than three per cent. Dissatisfied, men sought other channels for their savings, nor sought in vain. Joint Stock Companies arose on every side. Projects, good and bad, sprang up like mushrooms in a night. Old lodes and new harbours, old canals and new fisheries, were taken in hand, and for all these there seemed to be capital. Shares rose to a premium before the companies were floated, and soon the bounds of our shores were found to be too narrow for British enterprise. At that moment, however, the separation of the South American countries from Spain fell out, and these were at once seen to offer new outlets. The romantic were dazzled with legends of mines of gold and pockets of diamonds, while the gravest saw gain in pampas waving with wheat and prairies grazed by countless herds. It was felt, even by the most cautious, that a new era had set in. Trade, soaring on a continual rise in prices, was to know no bounds. If the golden age of commerce had not begun, something very like it had come to bless the British merchant.

Under such circumstances the Valleys Railroad seemed a practical thing even to Grounds, and Ovington's question was answered by a general assent.

'Very good, gentlemen,' he resumed. 'Then I may take that as agreed.' He proceeded to enter upon the details of the scheme. The length of the line would be fourteen miles. The capital was to be £45,000, divided into 4500 shares of £10 each, £1 a share to be paid at once, the sum so raised to be used for the preliminary expenses; £1 10*s*. per share to be paid three months later, and the rest to be called up as required. The directors' qualification would be fifty shares. The number of directors would be seven—the five gentlemen now present and two to be named, as to whom he would have a word to say by-and-by. Mr. Bourdillon, of whose abilities he desired to speak in high praise—here several at the table looked kindly at the young man—and who for other reasons was eminently fitted for the position, would be secretary.

'But will the forty-five thousand be enough, sir?' Grounds ventured timidly. He alone was not directly interested in the venture. Wolley was the tenant of a large mill. Sir Charles was the owner of two mills and the hamlets about them, Acherley of a third. Ovington had various interests.

'To complete the line, Mr. Grounds? We believe so. To provide the engine and coaches another fifteen thousand will be needed, but this may be more cheaply raised by a mortgage.'

Sir Charles shied at the word. 'I don't like a mortgage, Mr. Ovington,' he said.

'No, d——n a mortgage!' Acherley chimed in. He had had much experience of them.

'The point is this,' the banker explained. 'The road once completed, we shall be able to raise the fifteen thousand at five per cent. If we issue shares they must partake, equally with ourselves, in the profits, which may be fifteen, twenty, perhaps twenty-five per cent.'

A twinkle of greed passed from eye to eye. Fifteen, twenty, twenty-five per cent.! Ho, ho!

'The next question,' Ovington continued, 'is that of the right of way. We cannot use the highway, the gradients and angles render that impossible. We must acquire a right of way; but, fortunately, the estates we run over are few, no more than thirteen in all, and for a full third of the distance they are represented at this table.' He bowed gracefully to the two landowners. 'Sir Charles will, of course, be President of the Road and Chairman of the Directors. We are fortunate in having at our head a country gentleman who has'—he bowed again—'the enlightenment to see that the landed interest is best served by making commerce contributory to its well-being.'

'But what about the game?' Sir Charles asked anxiously. 'You don't think——'

'The greatest care will be taken on that point. We shall see that no covert is closely approached.'

'And the—you won't bring the line within sight of——'

'Of the Park? God forbid! The amenities of every estate must be carefully guarded. And, of course, a fair price for the right of way will be agreed. Seven of the smaller landowners I have sounded, and we shall have no trouble with them. The largest estate outstanding——'

'Is my landlord's, I'll bet!' Wolley exclaimed.

'Yes—is Garth. Mr. Griffin's.'

Wolley laughed rudely. 'Garth? Ay, you'll have your work cut out there!'

'Oh, I don't know!'

'I do. And you'll find I'm right.'

'Well, I hope——'

'You may hope what you like!' Sir Charles shuddered at the man's brusqueness. 'The Squire's a hard nut to crack, and so you'll find, banker. If you can get him to do a thing he don't wish to do, you'll be the first that ever has. He hates the name of trade as he hates the devil!'

The baronet sat up. 'Trade?' he exclaimed. 'Oh! but I am not aware, sir, that this is—— Surely a railroad is on another footing?' Alarm was written on his face.

'Quite!' Ovington struck in hurriedly. 'Entirely different! Another thing altogether, Sir Charles. There can be only one opinion on that.'

'Of course, if I thought I was entering on anything like——'

'A railroad is on an entirely different footing,' the banker repeated, with an angry glance at Wolley, who, unrepentant, continued to stare before him, a sneer on his face. 'On an entirely different footing. Even Mr. Griffin, prejudiced as I venture with all respect to think he is—even he would agree to that. But I have considered the difficulty, gentlemen, and I have no doubt we can surmount it. I propose to see him on Monday morning, accompanied by Mr. Bourdillon, his nephew—great-nephew, I should say—and between us I have no doubt that we shall be able to persuade him.'

Acherley looked over his shoulder at the secretary, who sat at a small table at Ovington's elbow. 'Like the job, Arthur?' he asked.

'I think Sir Charles's example will go a long way with him,' Bourdillon answered. He was a tactful young man.

The banker put the interruption aside. 'I shall see Mr.

Griffin on Monday, and with your consent, gentlemen, I propose to offer him the sixth seat at the Board.'

'Quite right, quite right,' Sir Charles murmured, much relieved.

'He'll not take it!' Wolley persisted.

'My dear sir!'

'You will see I am right.'

'Well, there are more ways than one. At any rate I will see him and report to the next meeting, when, with the chairman's approbation, we shall draw up the prospectus. In that connection'—he consulted his paper—'I have already received overtures from customers of the bank for four hundred shares.' There was a murmur of applause and Grounds's face betrayed relief. 'Then Sir Charles has put himself down for three hundred.' He bowed deferentially to Woosenham. 'Mr. Acherley for one hundred and fifty, Mr. Wolley has taken up one hundred and twenty-five, and Mr. Grounds—I have not heard from Mr. Grounds, and there is no hurry. No hurry at all!'

But Grounds, feeling that all eyes were on him, and feeling also uncomfortable in his company, took the fence up to which he had been brought. He murmured that he would take one hundred and twenty-five.

'Excellent!' said Ovington. 'And I, on behalf of the bank, propose to take four hundred.' Again there was a murmur of applause. 'So that before we go to the public we have already one-third of the shares taken up. That being so, I feel no doubt that we shall start at a premium before we cut the first sod.'

There followed a movement of feet, an outburst of hilarity. For this was what they had all wished to hear; this was the point. Chairs were pushed back, and Sir Charles, who was as fearful for his prestige as Grounds for his money, recovered his cheerfulness. Even Acherley became good-humoured. 'Well, here's to the Valleys Railroad!' he cried. 'Damme, we ought to have something to drink it in!'

The banker ignored this, and Sir Charles spoke. 'But as to the seventh seat at the Board? We have not arranged that, I think?' He liked to show that nothing escaped him, and that if he was above business he could still, when he condescended to it, be a business man.

'No,' Ovington agreed. 'But I suggest that, with your permission, we hold that over. There may be a big subscriber taking three or four hundred shares?'

'Quite so, quite so.'

'Somebody may come forward, and the larger the applications the higher the premium, gentlemen.'

Again eyes glistened, and there was a new movement. Woosenham took his leave, bowing to Wolley and Grounds, and shaking hands with the others. Acherley went with him and Ovington accompanied them, bare-headed, to Sir Charles's carriage, which was waiting before the bank. As he returned Wolley waylaid him and drew him into a corner. A conference took place, the banker turning the money in his fob as he listened, his face grave. Presently the clothier entered on a second explanation. In the end Ovington nodded. He called Rodd from the counter and gave him an order. He left his customer in the bank.

When he re-entered the parlour Grounds had disappeared, and Arthur, who was bending over his papers, looked up. 'Wolley wanted his notes renewed, I suppose?' he said. The bank had few secrets for this shrewd young man, who had learnt as much of business in eighteen months as Rodd the cashier had learned in ten years, or as Clement Ovington would learn in twenty.

The banker nodded. 'And three hundred more on his standing loan.'

Arthur whistled. 'I wonder you go on carrying him, sir.'

'If I cut him loose now——'

'There would be a loss, of course.'

'Yes, but that is not all, lad. Where would the Railroad scheme be? Gone. And that's not all, either. His fall would deal a blow to credit. The money that we are drawing out of the old stockings and the cracked tea-pots would go back to them. Half the clothiers in the Valley would shiver, and neither I nor you would be able to say where the trouble would stop, or who would be in the *Gazette* next week. No, we must carry him for the present, and pay for his railway shares too. But we shall hold them, and the profits will eventually come to us. And if the railway is made, or begun, it will raise the value of mills and increase our security; so that whether he goes on or we have to take the mills over—which Heaven forbid!—the ground will be firmer. It went well?'

'Splendidly! The way you managed them!' The lad laughed.

'What is it?'

'Grounds asked me if I did not think that you were like the pictures of old Boney. I said I did. The Napoleon of Finance, I told him. Only, I added, you knew a deal better where to stop.'

Ovington shook his head at the flatterer, but was pleased with the flattery. More than once, people had stopped him in the street and told him that he was like Napoleon. It was not only that he was stout and of middle height, with his head sunk between his shoulders ; but he had the classic profile, the waxen complexion, the dominating brow and keen bright eyes, nay, something of the air of power of the great Exile who had died three years before. And he had something, too, of his ambition. Sprung from nothing, a self-made man, a native of the district, he seemed in his neighbours' eyes to have already reached a wonderful eminence. But in his own eyes he was still low on the hill of fortune. He was still a country banker, and new at that. But if the wave of prosperity which was sweeping over the country and which had already wrought so many changes, if this could be taken at the flood, nothing, he believed, was beyond him. He dreamed of a union with Dean's, the old conservative steady-going bank of the town ; of branches here and branches there ; finally of an amalgamation with a London bank, of Threadneedle Street, and a directorship—but Arthur was speaking.

'You managed Grounds splendidly,' he said. 'I'll wager he's sweating over what he's done ! But do you think—' he looked keenly at the banker as he put the question, for he was eager to know what was in his mind—'the thing will succeed, sir ?'

'The railroad ?'

'Yes.'

'I think that the shares will go to a premium. And I see no reason why the railroad should not succeed in time. If I did not think so, I should not be fostering it. It may take time and, of course, more money than we think. But if credit remains good, and nothing occurs to dash the public—no, I don't see why it should not succeed. And if it does it will give such an impetus to the trade of the Valleys, three-fourths of which passes through our hands, as will repay us many times over.'

'I am glad you think so. I was not sure.'

'Because I led Grounds a little ? Oh, that was fair enough. It does not follow from that, that honesty is not the banker's only policy. Make no mistake about that. But I am going into the house now. Just bring me the note-issue book, will you ? I must see how we stand. I shall be in the dining-room.'

'Very good, sir.'

But when Arthur went into the house a few minutes later he met Betty, who was crossing the hall. 'Your father wanted this book,' he said. 'Will you take it to him?'

But Betty put her hands behind her back. 'Why? Where are you going?'

'You have forgotten that it is Saturday. I am going home.'

'Horrid Saturday! I thought that to-night, with father just back——'

'I wouldn't go? If I don't my mother will think that the skies have fallen. Besides, I am riding Clement's mare, and if I don't go, how is he to come back?'

'As you go at other times. On his feet.'

'Ah, well, very soon I shall have a horse of my own. You'll see, Betty. We are all going to make our fortunes now.'

'Fortunes?'—with disdain. 'Whose?'

'Your father's for one.'

'Silly! He's made his.'

'Then yours—and mine, Betty. Yours and mine—and Clement's.'

'I don't think he'll thank you.'

'Then Rodd's. But, no, we'll not make Rodd's. We'll not make Rodd's, Betty.'

'And why not Mr. Rodd's?'

'Never mind. We'll not make it,' mischievously. 'I wonder why you've got such a colour, Betty?' And as she snatched the book from him and threatened him with it, 'Good-bye till Monday. I'm late now, and it will be dark before I am out of the town.'

With a gay nod he vanished through the door that led into the bank. She looked after him, the book in her hand. Her lip curled. 'Rodd indeed!' she murmered. 'Rodd? As if I should ever—oh, isn't he provoking!'

CHAPTER II.

THE village of Garthmyle, where Arthur had his home, lies in the lap of the border hills more than seven miles from Aldersbury, and night had veiled the landscape when he rode over the bridge and up the village street. The squat church-tower, firm and enduring as the hopes it embodied, rose four-square above the thatched dwellings, and some half-mile away the rider could discern or imagine the blur of trees that masked Garth, on its sister eminence. But the bounds of the valley, in the mouth of which the village stands, were obscured by darkness; the steep limestone wall which fenced it on one side and the more distant wooded hills that sloped gently to it on the other were alike hidden. It was only when Arthur had passed through the hamlet, where all doors were closed against the chill of a January night, and he had ridden a few paces down the hillock on which the village stands, that the lights of the Cottage broke upon his view. Many a time had they, friendly beacons of home and rest, greeted him at that point.

Not that Arthur saw them as beacons, for at no time was he much given to sentiment. His outlook on life was too direct and vivid for that, and to-day in particular his mind was teeming with more practical thoughts, with hopes and plans and calculations. But the lights meant that a dull ride over a rough road and through a darkening country was at an end, and so far they gave him pleasure. He opened the gate and rode round to the stable, gave up the horse to Pugh, the man-of-all-work, and made his way into the house.

He entered upon a scene as cheerful as any lights shining on weary traveller could promise. In a fair-sized room a clear grate held a coal fire, the flames of which danced on the red-papered walls. A kettle bubbled on the hob, a tea-tray gleamed on the table, and between the two a lady and gentleman sat, eating crumpets; the lady with much elegance and a napkin spread over her lavender silk dress, the gentleman in a green cutaway coat with basket buttons—a coat that ill concealed the splashed gaiters for which he had more than once asked pardon.

But fair as things looked on the surface, all was not perfect even in this pleasant interior. The lady held herself stiffly, condescension in her eyes—eyes which rested rather more often than was courteous on the spatter-dashes. Secretly she thought her company not good enough for her, while the gentleman was frankly bored. Neither was finding the other as congenial as a first glance suggested, and it would have been hard to say which found Arthur's entrance the more welcome interruption.

'Hallo, mother!' he said, stooping carelessly to kiss her. 'Hallo, Clement.'

'My dear Arthur!' the lady cried, the lappets of her cap shaking as she embraced him. ‘How late you are! That horrid bank! I am sure that some day you will be robbed and murdered on your way home!’

‘I! No, mother. I don't bring the money, more's the pity! I am late, am I? The worse for Clement, who has to ride home. But I have been doing your work, my lad, so you mustn't grumble. What did you get?’

‘A brace and a wood-pigeon. Has my father come?’

‘Yes, he has come, and I am afraid has a wigging in store for you. But—a brace and a wood-pigeon? Lord, man,’ with a little contempt in his tone, ‘what do you do with your gun all day? Why, Acherley told me that in that rough between the two fallows above the brook——’

‘Oh, Arthur,’ Mrs. Bourdillon interposed, ‘never mind that!’ She had condescended sufficiently, she thought, and wished to hear no more of Clement Ovington's doings. ‘I've something more important to tell you, much more important. I've had a dreadful shock to-day.’

She was a faded lady, rather foolish than wise, and very elegant: one who made the most of such troubles as she had, and the opening her son now heard was one which he had heard often before.

‘What's the matter now, mother?’ he asked, stooping to warm his hands.

‘Your uncle has been here.’

‘Well, that's no new thing.’

‘But he has behaved dreadfully, perfectly dreadfully to me.’

‘I don't know that that is new, either.’

‘He began again about your refusal to take Orders, and your going into that dreadful bank instead.’

Arthur shrugged his shoulders. ‘That's one for you, Clement.’

‘Oh, that wasn't the one half,’ the lady continued, unbending. ‘He said, there was the living, three hundred and fifty a year, and old Mr. Trubshaw seventy-eight. And he'd have to sell it and put in a stranger and have quarrels about tithes. He stood there with his great stick in his hand and his eyes glaring at me like an angry cat's, and scolded me till I didn't know whether I stood on my head or my heels. He wanted to know where you got your low tastes from.’

‘There you are again, Clement!’

‘And your wish to go into trade, and I answered him quite sharp that you didn't get them from me; as for Mr. Bourdillon's grandfather, who had the plantations in Jamaica, it wasn't the same at all, as everybody knows and agrees that nothing is genteeler than the West Indies with black men to do the work!'

'You confounded him there, mother, I'm sure. But as we have heard something like this before, and Clement is not much interested, if that is all——'

'Oh, but it is not all! Very far from it!' Mrs. Bourdillon's head shook till the lappets swung again. 'The worst is to come, I can tell you. He said that we had had the Cottage rent-free for four years—and I'm sure I don't know who has a better right to it—but that that was while he still hoped that you were going to live like a gentleman, like the Griffins before you—and I am sure the Bourdillons were gentry, or I should have been the last to marry your father! But as you seemed set on going your own way and into the bank for good—and I must say I told him it wasn't any wish of mine and I'd said all I could against it, as you know, and Mr. Clement knows the same—why, it was but right that we should pay rent like other people! And it would be thirty pounds a year from Lady Day!'

'The d—d old hunks!' Arthur cried. He had listened unmoved to his mother's tirade, but this touched him. 'Well, he is a curmudgeon! Thirty pounds a year? Well, I'm d—d! And all because I won't starve as a parson!'

But his mother rose in arms at that. 'Starve as a parson!' she cried. 'Why, I think you are as bad, one as the other. I'm sure your father never starved!'

'No, I know, mother. He was passing rich on four hundred pounds a year. But that is not going to do for me.'

'Well, I don't know what you want!'

'My dear mother, I've told you before what I want.' Arthur was fast regaining the good temper that he seldom lost. 'If I were a bishop's son and could look to be a bishop, or if I were an archdeacon's son with the prospect of a fat prebend and a rectory or two to match, I'd take Orders. But with no prospect except the Garthmyle living, and with tithes falling——'

'But haven't I told you over and over again that you have only to make-up to—but there, I haven't told you that Jos was with him, and I will say this for her, that she looked as ashamed for him as I am sure I was! I declare I was sorry for the girl and she not daring to put in a word—such an old bear as he is to her!'

'Poor Jos!' Arthur said. 'She has not a very bright life of it. But this does not interest Clement, and we're keeping him.'

The young man had indeed made more than one attempt to take leave, but every time he had moved Mrs. Bourdillon had either ignored him, or by a stately gesture had claimed his silence. He rose now.

'I dare say you know my cousin?' Arthur said.

'I've seen her,' Clement answered; and his mind went back to the only occasion on which he had remarked Miss Griffin. It had been at the last Race Ball at Aldersbury that he had noticed her—a gentle, sweet-faced girl, plainly and even dowdily dressed, and so closely guarded by her proud old dragon of a father that, warned by the fate of others and aware that his name was not likely to find favour with the Squire, he had shrunk from seeking an introduction. But he had noticed that she sat out more than she danced; sat, indeed, in a kind of isolation, fenced in by the old man, and regarded by girls more smartly dressed with glances of half-scornful pity. He had had time to watch her, for he also, though for different reasons, had been a little without the pale, and he had found her face attractive. He had imagined how differently she would look were she suitably dressed. 'Yes,' he continued, recalling it, 'she was at the last Race Ball, I think.'

'And a mighty poor time she had of it,' Arthur answered, half carelessly, half contemptuously. 'Poor Jos! She hasn't at any time much of a life with my beauty of an uncle. Twopence to get and a penny to spend!'

Mrs. Bourdillon protested. 'I do wish you would not talk of your cousin like that,' she said. 'You know that she's your uncle's heiress, and if you only——'

Arthur cut her short. 'There! There! You don't remember, mother, that Clement has seven miles to ride before his supper. Let him go now! He'll be late enough.'

That was the end, and the two young men went out together. When Arthur returned after seeing his guest start, the tea had been removed and his mother was seated at her tambour work. He took his stand before the fire. 'Confounded old screw!' he fumed. 'Thirty pounds a year? And he's three thousand, if he's a penny! And more likely four!'

'Well, it may be yours some day,' with a sniff. 'I'm sure Jos is ready enough.'

'She'll have to do as he tells her.'

'But Garth must be hers.'

'And still she'll have to do as he tells her. Don't you know yet, mother, that Jos has no more will than a mouse? But never mind, we can afford his thirty pounds. Ovington is giving me a hundred and fifty, and I'm to have another hundred as secretary to this new Company—that's news for you. With your two hundred and fifty we shall be able to pay his rent and shall be better off than before. I shall buy a nag—Packham has one to sell—and move to better rooms in town.'

'But you'll still be in that dreadful bank,' Mrs. Bourdillon sighed. 'Really, Arthur, with so much money it seems a pity you should lower yourself to it.'

He had some admirable qualities besides the gaiety, the alertness, the good looks that charmed all comers; aye, and besides the rather uncommon head for figures and for business which came, perhaps, of his Huguenot ancestry, and had commended him to the banker. Of these qualities patience with his mother was one. So, instead of snubbing her, 'Why dreadful?' he asked good-humouredly. 'Because all our county fogies look down on it? Because having nothing but land, and drawing all their importance from land, they're jealous of the money that is shouldering them out and threatening their pride of place? Listen to me, mother. There is a change coming! Whether they see it or not, and I think they do see it, there is a change coming, and stiff as they hold themselves, they will have to give way to it. Three thousand a year? Four thousand? Why, if Ovington lives another ten years what do you think that he will be worth? Not three thousand a year, but ten, fifteen, twenty thousand!'

'Arthur!'

'It is true, mother. Aye, twenty, it is possible! And do you think that when he can buy up half a dozen of these thick-headed Squires who can just add two to two and make four—that he'll not count? Do you think that they'll be able to put him on one side? No! And they know it. They see that the big manufacturers and the big ironmasters and the big bankers who are putting together hundreds of thousands are going to push in among them and can't be kept out! And therefore trade, as they call it, stinks in their nostrils!'

'Oh, Arthur, how horrid!' Mrs. Bourdillon protested, 'you are growing as coarse as your uncle. And I'm sure we don't want a lot of vulgar purse-proud——'

'Purse-proud? And what is the Squire? Land-proud! But,' growing more calm, 'never mind that. You will take a different view when I tell you something that I heard to-day. Ovington let drop a word about a—partnership.'

'La, Arthur! But——'

'A partnership! Nothing definite, nothing to bind, and not yet, but in the future. It was but a hint. But think of it, mother! It is what I have been aiming at all along, but I didn't expect to hear of it yet. Not one or two hundred a year, but say, five hundred to begin with, and three, four, five thousand by and by! Five thousand!' His eyes sparkled and he threw back the hair from his forehead with a characteristic gesture. 'Five thousand a year! That's something. Think of that and don't talk to me of Orders. Take Orders! Be a beggarly parson while I have that in my power, and in my power while I am still young! For trust me, with Ovington at the helm and the tide at flood we shall move. We shall move, mother! The money is there, lying there, lying everywhere to be picked up. And we shall pick it up.'

'You take my breath away!' his mother protested, her faded, delicate face unusually flushed. 'Five thousand a year! Gracious me! Why, it is more than your uncle has!' She raised her mittened hands in protest. 'Oh, it is impossible!' The vision overcame her.

But 'It is perfectly possible,' he repeated. 'Clement is of no use. He is for ever wanting to be out of doors—a farmer spoiled. Rodd's a mere mechanic. Ovington cannot do it all, and he sees it. He must have someone he can trust. And then it is not only that I suit him. I am what he is not—a gentleman.'

'If you could have it without going to the bank!' Mrs. Bourdillon said. And she sighed, golden as was the vision. But before they parted his eloquence had almost persuaded her. She had heard such things, had listened to such hopes, had been dazzled by such sums that she was well-nigh reconciled even to that which the old Squire dubbed 'the trade of usury.'

CHAPTER III.

MEANWHILE Clement Ovington jogged homeward through the darkness, his thoughts divided between the discussion at which he had made an unwilling third, and the objects about him which were never without interest for this young man. He had an ear, and a very sharp one, for the piping of the pee-wits in the low land by the river, and the owl's cadenced cry in the trees about Garth. He marked the stars shining in a depth of heaven opened amid the flying wrack of clouds; he picked out Jupiter sailing with supreme dominion, and the Dog-star travelling across the southern tract. His eye caught the gleam of water on a meadow, and he reflected that old Gregory would never do any good with that ground until he made some stone drains in it. Not a sound in the sleeping woods, not the barking of a dog at a lonely homestead—and he knew every farm by name and sight and quality—escaped him; nor the shape of a covert, blurred though it was and leafless. But amid all these interests, and more than once, his thoughts as he rode turned inwards, and he pictured the face of the girl at the ball. Long forgotten, it recurred to him with strange persistence.

He was an out-of-door man, and that, in his position, was the pity of it. Aldersbury School—and Aldersbury was a very famous school in those days—and Cambridge had done little to alter the tendency: possibly the latter, seated in the midst of wide open spaces, under a wide sky, the fens its neighbours, had done something to strengthen his bent. Bourdillon thought of him with contempt, as a clodhopper, a rustic, hinting that he was a throwback to an ancestor, not too remote, who had followed the plough and whistled for want of thought. But he did Clement an injustice. It was possible that in his love of the soil he was a throwback; he would have made, and indeed he was, a good ploughman. He had learnt the trick with avidity, giving good money, solid silver shillings, that Hodge might rest while he worked. But, a ploughman, he would not have turned a clod without noticing its quality, nor sown a seed without considering its fitness, nor observed a rare plant without wondering why it grew in that position, nor looked up without drawing from the sky some sign of the weather or the hour. Much less would he have gazed down a woodland glade, flecked with sunlight, without perceiving its beauty.

He was, indeed, both in practice and theory a lover of Nature; breathing freely its open air, understanding its moods, asking nothing better than to be allowed to turn them to his purpose. Though he was no great reader, he read Wordsworth, and many a line was fixed in his memory and, on occasions when he was alone, rose to his lips.

But he hated the desk and he hated figures. His thoughts as he stood behind the bank counter, or drummed his restless heels against the legs of his high stool, were far away in fallow and stubble, or where the trout, that he could tickle as to the nature born, lay under the caving bank. And to his father and to those who judged him by the bank standard, and felt for him a half scornful liking, he seemed to be an inefficient, a trifler. They said in Aldersbury that it was lucky for him that he had a father.

Perhaps of all about him it was from that father that he could expect the least sympathy. Ovington was not only a banker, he was a banker to whom his business was everything. He had created it. It had made him. It was not in his eyes a mere adjunct, as in the eyes of one born in the purple and to the leisure which invites to the higher uses of wealth. Able he was, and according to his lights honourable; but a narrow education had confined his views, and he saw in his money only the means to rise in the world and eventually to become one of the landed class which at that time monopolised all power and all influence, political as well as social. Such a man could only see in Clement a failure, a reversion to the yeoman type, and own with sorrow the irony of fortune that so often delights to hand on the sceptre of an Oliver to a 'Tumble-down-Dick.'

Only from Betty, young and romantic, yet possessed of a woman's intuitive power of understanding others, could he look for any sympathy. And even Betty doubted while she loved—doubted—for she had also that other attribute of woman, a basis of sound common-sense. She admired her father. She saw more clearly than Clement what he had done for them and to what he was raising them. And she could not but grieve that Clement was not more like him, that Clement could not fall in with his wishes and devote himself to the attainment of the end for which the elder man had worked. She could enter into the father's disappointment as well as into the son's distaste.

Meanwhile Clement, dreaming now of a girl's face, now of a new drill which he had seen that morning, now of the passing sights and sounds which would have escaped nine men out of ten but had a meaning for him, drew near to the town. He topped the last eminence, rode under the ancient oak, whence, tradition had it, a famous Welshman had watched the wreck of his fortunes on a pitched field; finally he saw, rising from the river before him, the amphitheatre of dim lights that was the town. Descending he crossed the bridge.

He sighed as he did so. For to him to pass from the silent lands and to enter the brawling streets where apprentices were putting up the shutters and beggars were raking among heaps of market garbage was to fall half way from the clouds. To right and left the inns were roaring drunken choruses, drabs stood in the mouths of the alleys—dubbed in Aldersbury 'shuts'—tradesmen were hastening to wet their profits at the Crown or the Gullet. When at last he heard the house door clang behind him, and breathed the confined air of the bank, redolent for him of ledgers and day-books, the fall was complete. He reached the earth.

If he had not done so, his sister's face when he entered the dining-room would have brought him to his level.

'My eye and Betty Martin!' she said. 'But you've done it now, my lad!'

'What's the matter?'

'Father will tell you that. He's in his room and as black as thunder. He came home by the mail at three—Sir Charles waiting, Mr. Acherley waiting, the bank full, no Clement! You are in for it. You are to go to him the moment you come in.'

He looked longingly at the table where supper awaited him. 'What did he say?' he asked.

'He said all I have said and d—n besides. It's no good looking at the table, my lad. You must see him first and then I'll give you your supper.'

'All right!' he replied, and he turned to the door with something of a swagger.

But Betty, whose moods were as changeable as the winds, and whose thoughts were much graver than her words, was at the door before him. She took him by the lapel of his coat and looked up in his face. 'You won't forget that you're in fault, Clem, will you?' she said in a small voice. 'Remember that if he had not worked there would be no walking about with a gun or a rod for you. And no looking at new drills, whatever they are, for I know that is what you had in your mind this morning. He's a good dad, Clem—better than most. You won't forget that, will you?'

'But after all a man must——'

'Suppose you forget that "*after all*,"' she said sagely. 'The truth is you have played truant, haven't you? And you must take your medicine. Go and take it like a good boy. There are but three of us, Clem.'

She knew how to appeal to him, and how to move him; she knew that at bottom he was fond of his father. He nodded and went, knocked at his father's door and, tamed by his sister's words, took his scolding—and it was a sharp scolding—with patience. Things were going well with the banker, he had had his usual four glasses of port, and he might not have spoken so sharply if the contrast between the idle and the industrious apprentice had not been thrust upon him that day with a force which had startled him. That little hint of a partnership had not been dropped without a pang. He was jealous for his son, and he spoke out.

'If you think,' he said, tapping the ledger before him, to give point to his words, 'that because you've been to Cambridge this job is below you, you're mistaken, Clement. And if you think that you can do it in your spare time, you're still more mistaken. It's no easy task, I can tell you, to make a bank and keep a bank, and manage your neighbour's money as well as your own, and if you think it is, you're wrong. To make a hundred thousand pounds is a deal harder than to make Latin verses—or to go tramping the country on a market day with your gun! That's not business! That's not business, and once for all, young man, if you are not going to help me, I warn you that I must find someone who will! And I shall not have far to look!'

'I'm afraid, sir, that I have not got a turn for it,' Clement pleaded.

'But what have you a turn for? You shoot, but I'm hanged if you bring home much game. And you fish, but I suppose you give the fish away. And you're out of town, idling and doing God knows what, three days in the week! No turn for it? No will to do it, you mean. Do you ever think,' the banker continued, joining the fingers of his two hands as he sat back in his chair, and looking over them at the culprit, 'where you would be and what you would be doing if I had not toiled for you? If I had not made the business at which you do not condescend to work? I had to make my own way from the bottom. My grandfather was little better than a labourer, and but for what I've done you might be a clerk at a pound a week, and a bad clerk, too! Or behind a shop-counter, if you liked it better. And if things were to go wrong with me—for I'd have you remember that nothing in this world is quite safe—that is where you may still be! Still, my lad!'

For the first time Clement looked his father fairly in the face—and pleased him. 'Well, sir,' he said, 'if things go wrong I hope you won't find me wanting. Nor ungrateful for what you have done for us. I know how much it is. But I'm not Bourdillon, and I've not got his head for figures.'

'You've not got his application. That's the mischief! Your heart's not in it.'

'Well, I don't know that it is,' Clement admitted. 'I suppose you couldn't——' he hesitated, a new hope kindled within him. He looked at his father doubtfully.

'Couldn't what?'

'Release me from the bank, sir? And give me a—a very small capital to——'

'To go and idle upon?' the banker exclaimed, and thumped the ledger in his indignation at an idea so preposterous. 'No, by G—d, I couldn't! Pay you to go idling about the country, more like a dying duck in a thunder-storm, as I am told you do, than a man! Find you capital and see you loiter your life away with your hands in your pockets? No, I couldn't, my boy, and I would not if I could! Capital, indeed? Give you capital? For what?'

'I could take a farm,' sullenly, 'and I shouldn't idle. I can work hard enough when I like my work. And I know something about farming, and I believe I could make it pay.'

The other gasped. To the banker, with his mind on thousands, with his plans and hopes for the future, with his golden visions of Lombard Street and financial sway, to talk of a farm and of making it pay! It seemed—it seemed worse than lunacy. His son must be out of his mind. He stared at him, honestly wondering. 'A farm!' he ejaculated at last. 'And make it pay? Go back to the clodhopping life your grandfather lived before you and from which I lifted you? Peddle with pennies and sell ducks and chickens in the market? Why—why, I don't know what to say to you?'

'I like an outdoor life,' Clement pleaded, his face scarlet.

'Like a—like a——' Ovington could find no word to express his feelings and with an effort he swallowed them down. 'Look here, Clement,' he said more mildly; 'what's come to you? What is it that is amiss with you? Whatever it is you must straighten it out, boy; there must be an end of this folly, for folly it is. Understand me, the day that you go out of the bank you go to stand on your own legs, without help from me. If you are prepared to do that?'

'I don't say that I could—at first.'

'Then while I keep you I shall certainly do it on my own terms. So, if you please, I will hear no more of this. Go back to your desk, go back to your desk, sir, and do your duty. I sent you to Cambridge at Butler's suggestion, but I begin to fear that it was the biggest mistake of my life. I declare I never heard such nonsense except from a man in love. I suppose you are not in love, eh ?'

'No !' Clement cried angrily, and he went out.

For he could not own to his father that he was in love; in love with the brown earth, the woods, and the wide straggling hedgerows, with the whispering wind and the music of the river on the shallows, with the silence and immensity of night. Had he done so, he would have spoken a language which his father did not and could not understand. And if he had gone a step farther and told him that he felt drawn to those who plodded up and down the wide stubbles, who cut and bound the thick hedge-rows, who wrought hand in hand with Nature day in and day out, whose lives were spent in an unending struggle with the soil until at last they sank and mingled with it—if he had told him that he felt his kinship with those humble folk who had gone before him, he would only have mystified him, only have angered him the more.

Yet so it was. And he could not change himself.

He went slowly to his supper and to Betty, owning defeat; acknowledging his father's strength of purpose, acknowledging his father's right, yet vexed at his own impotence. Life pulsed strongly within him. He longed to do something. He longed to battle, the wind in his teeth and the rain in his face, with some toil, some labour that would try his strength and task his muscles, and send him home at sunset weary and satisfied. Instead he saw before him an endless succession of days spent with his head in a ledger and his heels on the bar of his stool, while the sun shone in at the windows of the bank and the flies buzzed sleepily about him; days arid and tedious, shared with no companion more interesting than Rodd, who, excellent fellow, was not amusing, or more congenial than Bourdillon, who patronised him when he was not using him. And in future he would have to be more punctual, more regular, more assiduous ! It was a dreary prospect.

He ate his supper in morose silence until Betty, who had been quick to read the upshot of the interview in his face, came behind him and ruffled his hair. 'Good boy !' she whispered, leaning over him. 'His days shall be long in the land !'

'I wish to heaven,' he answered, 'they were in the land ! I am sure they will be long enough in the bank !'

But after that he recovered his temper.

(*To be continued.*)

SHELLEY'S FIRST WIFE : THE UNPUBLISHED LETTER.

In the year of grace 1643 a line of forts was drawn hastily round the western suburbs of London by order of the Parliament, who were fearful of an attack of the Royalist troops. One of these forts or bastions was named 'The Mount,' and between 1700 and 1750 a street was built of which the eastern extremity was Berkeley Square—the western the old Parliamentary fortress whose name was preserved not only in the street itself, but in a celebrated coffee-house, 'The Mount,' much frequented by wits and men of letters. Many of Laurence Sterne's love letters to Mrs. Draper are dated from 'The Mount,' for the creator of the immortal 'Tristram Shandy' lived his last days in apartments in Bond Street. Yet another 'Mount Coffee House' (which by the way was really a tavern) was destined to be connected with a great name in literature. Late in the eighteenth or quite early in the nineteenth century, a certain John Westbrook made a comfortable fortune there, retiring to a private house in Chapel Street some years prior to 1811. John Westbrook was the father of two daughters, Eliza and Harriet, the former by many years the elder. In those days Clapham was famous for the selectness of its 'seminaries for young ladies,' and to a Clapham school the retired publican sent his younger daughter. The establishment, 'Church House,' kept by a Mrs. Fenning, stood on the edge of Clapham Common facing old Trinity Church. Among Harriet Westbrook's schoolfellows were the sisters of Percy Bysshe Shelley, and it was through them that the poet and Harriet became acquainted, and by means of this acquaintance and its developments the name of that 'commonplace' young woman (I doubt if she ever deserved the description) can hardly fail to be prominent for centuries to come in the story of English poetry. No portrait of Harriet Westbrook exists, but both Thomas Love Peacock and Helen Shelley have painted vivid word-pictures of her, which portray a young girl whose personal charm and attraction must have been great indeed.

'All youthful freshness; fairness; bloom; short of stature; slightly and delicately formed; light of foot and graceful in her movements; with features regular, and well-proportioned; her complexion bright and clear, the tint of the blush rose shining through the lily; her abundant hair light brown, and beautiful as a poet's dream—the tone of her voice was pleasant; her speech the essence of frankness and cordiality—her laugh spontaneous, hearty, and joyous.'

It is certain that this beautiful child, only just sixteen, was unhappy and dissatisfied at home, and there can be no doubt that she confided her troubles to the young poet, giving him her love unasked. It has been said that only Shelley's native chivalry induced him to link his fate with hers, but surely there was more than chivalry in his regard for the younger daughter of John Westbrook? Those lines 'To Harriet'—

> 'Whose is the love that, gleaming through the world,
> Wards off the poisonous arrow of its scorn?
> Whose is the warm and partial praise,
> Virtue's most sweet reward?
>
> Beneath whose looks did my reviving soul
> Riper in truth and virtuous daring grow?
> Whose eyes have I gazed fondly on,
> And loved mankind the more?
>
> Harriet! on thine: thou wert my purer mind;
> Thou wert the inspiration of my song;
> Thine are these early wilding flowers,
> Though garlanded by me.
>
> Then press into thy breast this pledge of love,
> And know, though time may change and years may roll,
> Each flow'ret gathered in my heart
> It consecrates to thine'—

show feelings far warmer and stronger than chivalry and affection for the lady who inspired them. It is, however, uncertain to *which* Harriet they were addressed, whether to his young wife, or to an earlier flame, his cousin Harriet Grove. Shelley eloped with Harriet Westbrook from her father's house early in September 1811, and the young couple rushed off 'straight to Edinburgh,' where they became man and wife according to Scottish law. Afterwards in York, in Dublin, in Wales, in Lynmouth, in the little cottage at Keswick, there can be no doubt that Harriet was not only an affectionate wife but a congenial companion to her husband, something more than the 'agreeable and pretty' of the biographers; and had not Shelley, after their growing incompatibility of character asserted itself, met with a more appealing personality in Mary Godwin he would probably not have parted from his first wife with such crushing suddenness. Certainly even as late as March 1814, if he contemplated the possibility of a separation, he was at least prepared to assure the legal status of herself and her child, for on the 24th of that month he and Harriet were re-married at St. George's, Hanover Square. Here is a copy of the church register.

'Percy Bysshe Shelley and Harriet Shelley (formerly Harriet Westbrook, spinster, a minor) both of this Parish were re-married in this church by license (the parties having been already married to each other according to the rites and ceremonies of the Church of Scotland), in order to obviate all doubts, that have arisen, or shall or may arise, touching or concerning the validity of the aforesaid marriage, by and with the consent of John Westbrook, the natural and lawful father of the said minor, this twenty-fourth day of March in the year 1814, by me, Edward Williams, Curate. This marriage was solemnized between us—Percy Bysshe Shelley, Harriet Shelley, formerly Harriet Westbrook—in the presence of John Westbrook, John Stanley.'

This re-marriage was probably instigated by Shelley's father-in-law (whose nick-name was 'Jew Westbrook'), who thus desired to make assurance doubly sure.

Then in the following May the poet met Mary Godwin, now a girl of seventeen, whom he had not seen since she was a mere child—and the poet found 'his affinity' with a swiftness that recalls a humorous sketch of the late Artemus Ward—'Among the Free Lovers.' Harriet had already refused a reconciliation, and early in July we are told by Lady Shelley that

'to her [Mary] as they met one eventful day in St. Pancras Churchyard, by her mother's grave, Bysshe, in burning words, poured forth the tale of his wild past—how he had suffered, how he had been misled, and how if supported by her love he hoped in future years to enroll his name with the wise and good who had done battle for their fellow-men, and been true through all adverse storms to the cause of humanity—unhesitatingly she put her hand in his, and linked her fortune with his own.'

Whatever may be urged in Shelley's favour with regard to the arrangements he made for Harriet's future welfare, or the good advice he gave her as to her conduct, the fact remains that he practically deserted the young wife whose affections he had won and then, to all appearance, lost. The chivalry which had induced him to give her his earlier protection was not strong enough to prevent him from indulging his passion for another woman. For more than two years Harriet Shelley and her children must have led an unhappy and unsatisfied existence. *Where* she lived for the whole of that time it is impossible to say. Mr. Kegan Paul affirms definitely that 'the immediate cause of her death was that her father's door was shut against her.' However that may be, early in November 1816 (probably the 9th) Harriet sought a refuge from all her troubles in the waters of the Serpentine. 'Thus in gloom, abasement, and despair, closed the young life that had been so charming in the bridal days of 1811.' Before her death she wrote a letter to her sister, which is, however, in part addressed to her husband. This letter made a somewhat mysterious re-appearance many years after the writer's death. It has, I believe, never been published, but there is, I have reason to think, no cause to doubt its authenticity. It is merely dated 'Sat eve,' and is as follows :

'MY DEAREST AND MUCH BELV^{D} SISTER,—When you read this let^{r} I shall be no more an inhabitant of this miserable world. Do not regret the loss of one who could never be anything but a source of vexation and misery to you all belonging to me. Too wretched to exert myself, lowered in the opinion of every one, why should I drag on a miserable existence ? embittered by past recollections and not one ray of hope to rest on for the future. The remembrance of all your kindness which I have so unworthily repaid has often made my heart ache. I know that you will forgive me—because it is not in your nature to be unkind or severe to any. Dear amiable woman that I had never left you, oh ! that I had always taken your advice, I might have lived long and happy, but weak and unsteady have rushed on to my own destruction. I have not written to Bysshe. Oh no, what would it avail, my wishes or my prayers would not be attended to by him, and yet should he rec. this, perhaps he might grant my last request to let Ianthe remain with you always. Dear lovely child, with you she will enjoy much happiness, with him none. My dear Bysshe, let me conjure you by the remembrance of our days of happiness to grant my last wish. Do not take your innocent child from Eliza who has been more than I have, who has watched over her with such unceasing care. Do not refuse my last request, I never could refuse you and if you had never left me I might have lived, but as it is I freely forgive you and may you enjoy that happiness which you have deprived me of. There is your beautiful boy. oh! be careful of him, and his love may prove one day a rich reward. As you form his infant mind so will you reap the fruits hereafter. Now comes the sad task of saying farewell. Oh! I must be quick. God bless and watch over you all. You dear Bysshe and you dear Eliza. May all happiness attend ye both is the last wish of her who loved ye more than all others. My children—I dare not trust myself there, they are too young to regret me and ye will be kind to them for their own sakes more than mine. My parents—do not regret me, I was unworthy of your love and care. Be happy all of ye, so shall my spirit find rest and forgiveness. God bless you is the last prayer of the unfortunate

HARRIET S.

'To you my dear Sister I leave all my things; as they more properly belong to you than anyone and you will preserve them for Ianthe. God bless you both.'

That is Harriet Shelley's farewell to her sister, her husband, her children, her parents, and to the world. Surely the judgment of the world will hardly be that the woman who penned those lines was shallow, commonplace, heartless, or without intelligence?

W. COURTHOPE FORMAN.

ROBA DI ROMA.

The civilised world was startled, the world of letters, the lovers of religion and of all that is venerable and beautiful in tradition and art were filled with indignation when, on April 1, 1921, Senator Lanciani, the eminent archæologist, rose in his place in the Roman Senate to interrogate the Ministry as to the rumoured conversion of the Coliseum into a species of variety theatre and music-hall.

The answer was significant of the manner in which the desecration of Rome has been carried on by the civil and municipal authorities since the Eternal City fell under their dominion.

The Minister of Public Instruction, Signor Croce, under whose jurisdiction the ancient monuments of Rome seem to lie, made the astounding answer, received with indignant laughter, that a five-years lease of the Coliseum had been granted in February to a theatrical company by an under-secretary, and without his knowledge. 'There was doubtless some clause in the contract which laid it open to rescission, and in view of the protests and dissatisfaction the project evoked, he would undertake that it should go no further.' Well might Professor Lanciani express his wonder—*sua maraviglia*—that an act so abhorrent to the sanctity of the spot, 'its historical, artistic and traditional sanctity,' could have been effected by an underling without the knowledge or consent of his chief. Romans accustomed to the methods of their rulers, while drawing a breath of relief at the danger so narrowly escaped, gave thanks for the outburst of public feeling which had prevented the usual curt reply of the *fait accompli*, given so often to cut short the protests made against acts of a similar kind, effected in a similar manner.

The dealings of the authorities with that ancient monument have been neither merciful nor tender. Nature had clothed its ruined walls with an exquisite veil of greenery: a flora so marvellous and interesting that books had been written on its four hundred varieties, a few of which were so rare, that their seeds are supposed to have come in ancient days in the cages of wild beasts from tropical countries. They have all been scraped away, the walls are bare, and more damage has been done to them by dragging out the roots of the shrubs than might have happened naturally in the course of centuries. When we stand in the bare ugly interior, it is difficult to conjure up the picture of the old beauty we loved—now so ruthlessly banished.

We first find the name *Coliseum* in the writings of Bede, where he quotes a prophecy of Anglo-Saxon pilgrims:

> 'While stands the Coliseum, Rome shall stand;
> And when Rome falls, the world.'

So did its grandeur and its associations impress our forefathers in those early days; and, until 1872, on February 1 for many centuries might the solemn procession be seen, winding from the church of San Clemente to the Coliseum, carrying, with every circumstance of pomp and splendour, the relics of St. Ignatius (the disciple of St. John and companion of Polycarp) round the scene where on that date he had been devoured by lions—the first of the martyrs of the Coliseum.. The spot where, shortly after his death, a hundred and fifteen Christians were shot down by arrows was marked—until 1872—by a tall cross which was then demolished.

The Via Crucis was set up in the arena of the Coliseum in 1744, by a confraternity of laymen founded by Blessed Leonard of Porto Maurizio, and the procession of the Stations of the Cross took place every Friday afternoon at four o'clock—a picturesque sight—the members of the Confraternity in their grey gowns and hoods covering the face, leaving the eyes only visible, followed by a crowd chanting and praying at each station in turn; and then a rousing sermon by a Capuchin monk from a pulpit on the left of the arena—homely sermons, direct and vigorous and well suited to their auditory. The hallowed earth, soaked with the blood of martyrs, gave rise to the legend that Gregory the Great, replying to the request of the ambassadors of some king for relics for their sovereign, gave them a handful of earth from the Coliseum; and, on their objection that it was not a sufficiently worthy relic, pressing the earth between his hands, showed them the blood-stains on his palms from the soil saturated with the blood of martyrs. Pius V. urged those who sought for relics to gather up the dust of the arena of the Coliseum. These forms of ancient reverence and homage fell under the ban of the new rulers of Rome; the Via Crucis was swept away in 1874, and with it the full legend of the Coliseum's religious and old-world associations was banished as completely as the tender veil of greenery which had spread across its ruins. Since the war a reaction has set in, and, for the past two years, upon Good Friday afternoon, a procession might be seen wending its way around the naked and despoiled arena, where once had stood the fourteen stations of the Via Crucis, and chants and hymns once more rose from the hallowed spot.

A disquieting feature in the destruction and demolition of the beautiful and the aesthetic that has been pursued steadily in Rome for the last half-century is its consequent loss as a source of inspiration to the poet and the artist. Shelley has told us in immortal words how his 'Prometheus Unbound' was conceived:

> 'This poem was chiefly written upon the mountainous ruins of the Baths of Caracalla, among the flowery glades and thickets of odoriferous blossoming trees which are extended in ever-winding labyrinths upon its immense platforms and dizzy arches suspended in the air. The bright blue sky of Rome, and the effect of the vigorous awakening spring in that divinest climate, and the new life with which it drenches the spirit even to intoxication, were the inspiration of this drama.'[1]

Never again will a young poet find inspiration in that once enchanting spot; in 1879 the odoriferous blossoming trees, the bushes of lentiscus and phillyrea, were scraped away as at the Coliseum, and, although some roses and fragrant plants have lately been replanted, the ruins remain bare and hideous in their nakedness; the views that can be obtained of the Campagna from the top of the walls are all that is left of its intoxicating beauty. And who shall venture to divine or guess the future loss from this and so many another scene of havoc in the realms of art and poesy? To have reduced two of the most famous ancient monuments of Rome, as nearly as they could, to the level and appearance of a disused factory or railway station, is symbolical of what the city has been made to suffer at the hands of its new rulers.

What that passionate lover of old Rome, Augustus Hare, called 'the fury against trees which characterises most Italians,' irreparable in destruction, is apparent on every hand. When the great villas were sold for building purposes, the stately groves of cypresses and ilexes which would have lent dignity and grandeur and much needed shade to the meanest quarters, were all cut down. Gone are the immemorial ilexes, the finest in the world after those of Albano, which graced the gardens of the great Corsini Palace, and under whose shade Queen Christina of Sweden loved to preside over the meetings of the Arcadian Academy. To avert so great an injury to Rome Queen Margherita was moved to go in person to plead for their preservation: the municipality met her with the answer that she came too late, the trees had already been sold for firewood.

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[1] Preface to the *Prometheus Unbound.*

Between 1875 and 1880 the gardens of the Farnesina were taken over by the municipality, and destroyed to make way for the attempt to change the course of the Tiber in pursuance of a scheme of Garibaldi's. It is said that grief at the outrage hastened the death of their owner, the Duke di Ripalda; moreover, with the loss of those stately groves, Raphael's priceless frescoes in the Farnesina soon began to show signs of injury from the disturbance of the soil; it was for some time doubtful whether, by an insensate experiment to please and flatter Garibaldi, the authorities had not ruined one of their most precious possessions.

Cultured Italians raised their voices in unavailing protests:

> 'It is true that the villas have disappeared,' wrote Professor Lanciani, 'that their magnificent ilexes have been burnt into charcoal, their great pines used for timber, their hills and dales cut away or filled up to a dead level, and their delicious shady avenues destroyed to make room for broad, straight, sun-beaten thoroughfares, yet no one seems to have gained by it. Those who sold and those who bought the grounds have failed alike in their speculations.'[1]

The delightful lanes that led in every direction from the town, with their umbrella pines and ilexes, and tall cypresses standing out almost black against the sapphire sky, and where in the hottest hours of the day there was almost always a shady side of the road, have given place to immense boulevards, twice too wide for their traffic, where under the blazing sun clouds of white dust rise at every breath of wind and from the wheels of every vehicle to choke the few pedestrians. The beautiful Protestant cemetery narrowly escaped destruction because it stood in the way of a projected new road—a road abandoned as not required almost as soon as it was begun, but not before the graveyard was partly destroyed and the beautiful old wall broken down.

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[1] Lanciani, *The Ruins of Ancient Rome.*

In lieu of all the beautiful vegetation they have cut down, the municipal authorities have set here and there in the busiest thoroughfares the comical makeshift of a small round plot of earth, with a palm tree in the centre, a cactus or two and a few dusty shrubs, surrounded by the meanest of iron railings. They made another small concession when they allowed the carrying out of Signor Giacomo Boni's design to replant on classic sites the flowers most loved by the ancients: laurels and roses, pomegranates, oleanders, and myrtles.

The masters of neo-regal Rome have not been more happily inspired in what they have erected than in what they have pulled down. When their clumsy and ignorant schemes for turning Rome into a miniature Paris or Chicago broke upon the world, the *Times* put into words the regret and the indignation filling the breasts of all lovers of the Eternal City, summing up its indictment in a leading article of January 10, 1888:

'Nothing so pretentious, commonplace, unspiritual and dull has ever been produced as neo-regal Rome. In addition to a display of poverty of artistic ideas almost amounting to genius, the Roman municipality is, moreover, acknowledged to have set at defiance all the rules of recent sanitary science in a manner incomparably its own.'

And again:

'What the municipality has done is to make it impossible, without the intervention of a great earthquake, that it ever should be anything but the most absurd of all the cheap imitations of Paris.'

The idea never seems to have crossed the minds of the destroyers of so much that was precious in the architecture of the town which had become their prey, that the rulers of a great and ancient city are the custodians of its treasures, and bound to pass them on, as intact as may be, to future generations of its citizens. Far from this, they have carried on their iconoclastic work with stubborn energy; undeterred and undisturbed by the protests and objurgations, the petitions and sarcasms of the cultured men of their own race, and the critics and lovers of art from all parts of the world. Prayers and curses slipped over their triple covering of arrogance, ignorance, and the self-satisfied exercise of new-found power, like water over a duck's back, and for the first forty years of United Italy the work went on without a break, and even more effectually than that of the Goths and Vandals on Ancient Rome.

To make room for the monstrous *Palazzo di Giustizia* a number of picturesque and interesting buildings were pulled down between St. Peter's and the Tiber; the delicate green lines of the *Prati di Castello*, which up to 1880 extended from St. Peter's to the then noble cypresses of the Piazza del Popolo, have been effaced: one of the most interesting views in the world has been spoiled and replaced by a straight road of stucco buildings in the worst possible style of modern Italian architecture. The *Ministero delle Finanze* is as great an eye-sore as the *Giustizia*: 'The Roman curses it,' wrote Marion Crawford, 'for the millions it cost; but the stranger looks, smiles, and passes by.' Zola, in his 'Rome,' derides its gigantic mass, a cyclopean cube conceived '*en un jour d'orgueil par la folie de la pierre.*' It is indeed little short of miraculous that monuments of such dimensions—the *Finanze* is three hundred yards long and high in proportion—should be so entirely devoid of the slightest appearance of solidity or grandeur, proving once again that poverty of artistic feeling can only produce poverty and meanness of effect on however grand a scale.

The vulgar and pretentious square, the *Piazza dell' Independanza*, with its straggling fountain in the centre which looks at once meagre and overgrown, was made, as usual, at the wanton sacrifice of much that was picturesque and beautiful; and so hasty and careless was its construction, that many of its houses tumbled down before they were finished, a collapse of this sort killing fifty workmen in 1890. Hare's comment is not exaggerated when he says: 'There is not a single point in this entirely modern Rome which calls for anything but contempt. Hastily run up, with the worst material, and by unskilled workmen, its buildings luckily seem destined to perish within a century.' Even when he wrote, his prophecy had begun its fulfilment: some of the houses built on the site of the beautiful Villa Wolskonski already showed cracks in the wretched yellow-washed stucco, where the masonry was parting as the hollow foundations subsided, and walls on which the paint was almost fresh had to be shored up with beams. Parts of neo-regal Rome are likely to stand more and more in need of restoration.

In great things as in little the taste and judgment of the renovators of the town have been unhappy and at fault; few things escape their notice: at the Convent of Sant' Onofrio on the Janiculum, the room in which Tasso died, and which had been left untouched till then, was whitewashed all over in 1892. At the same time they ruined the effect of Beltraffio's beautiful fresco on the second floor, by having a gaudy fresco painted underneath it.

To rob the mighty Castel Sant' Angelo of something of its grandeur might have been the purpose of the destruction of its great projecting bastions, above which rose its stately mass with the solitary cypress cutting darkly against the sky. The fine papal escutcheon that lent its touch of ornament and distinction to the great grey front has been chipped off seemingly in puerile discontent, as too reminiscent of the days of papal sovereignty. The beautiful banks of the Tiber, once green with brilliant fennel and spurrey, have suffered change, and the river has been made a mere canal between banks of masonry; while the bridge that crosses it in front of the Castle has been ruthlessly mutilated. Here again, before this worst of the improvements of Rome, the world protested in vain. The bridge has entirely lost its original character, as the *Builder* pointed out in 1892:

> 'Besides having neither noticed nor respected any part of the characteristic and noble aspects of the sacred river, the engineers of the Tiber have not known how to avail themselves of that mastery of the water-way which Roman monuments show in the case of bridges. The Bridge of Sant' Angelo was one of those masterpieces.'

The fountains were one of the most characteristic and beautiful features of Rome, flinging their sparkling jets joyously against the sky, and gushing in tumultuous noisy masses from their many mouths—the great gift of pure refreshing water poured out unstintedly in over-abundant measure. Many have been done away with; some of the rest, like the famous fountain of Trevi, with its romantic legend, have been deprived of part of their water. Hardly a better example of inept blundering has been achieved than the removal of the beautiful fountain of Ponte Sisto opposite the quaint old Via Giulia, to another, perfectly unsuitable site in one of the new bare and ugly quarters. Its proportions were perfect in the place for which it had been designed; and now its charm is gone; lost not only to one of the few streets which the hand of the destroyer has hitherto spared, but also to the spot where it has been re-erected, and where it is wholly inharmonious and out of place.

When the interesting Tower of Pope Nicholas V. by the Castel Sant' Angelo was doomed in 1890, all Europe united in entreating that it might be spared, and one of the remaining ornaments of the city left to abut upon the Tiber. Remonstrance was, as usual, in vain, and the ugly road was driven in front of the Castle; the claims of ancient poetry and beauty—the heritage of the past—ignored. There was another beautiful old Tower—that of Paul II., which so grandly filled the end of the Corso, and was its most noble ornament. It was considered to stand in the way of the new—yet unfinished—Monument of King Victor Emmanuel, and had to go. With it were sacrificed the Gothic Cloisters and the Convent of Ara Coeli, the residence of the General of the Franciscans ever since 1252, when the original Benedictine Convent was given to the Order by Pope Innocent IV.

In order that Victor Emmanuel's monument might be uninterruptedly seen from the other end of his long Corso, the beautiful *loggia* that formed a wing of the great historic palace of the Piazza Venezia has been removed; the great square has been deprived of its charm by architects to whom the rectilinear and the rectangular would seem to have become the quest and object, as their ideal of the true line of beauty. The monument itself, with its gaudy monster groups of gilt statuary and glaring white colonnades, seems to have gathered up into itself and then expressed all the vanity and supercilious conceit, all the bad taste and degenerate artistic instinct of which the modern Italian mind was capable. Reminiscent as it is of a pantomime transformation scene, of a child's dream of a Brobdingnagian twelfth-cake, or of some 'White City' in a World's Fair, there could hardly have been found a more unfitted site for its erection than the Capitoline Hill. And the pity of it, the unhappy augury for the future is that Young Italy can hardly find words to express his admiration and delight at the vast achievement: 'grandiose,' 'sublime,' fail to convey his pride and satisfaction when extolling its beauty and its merits.

So the work of destruction went on decade after decade, slackening a little as time went on and it had less to feed on, until the outbreak of the war. Then, some of the Municipality's great schemes, including the erection of a monster glass gallery, even larger than the one which disfigures the great square of Milan, were perforce abandoned for lack of funds. It is devoutly to be wished that before the authorities find themselves rich enough to resume their labours, the timid reaction which has already begun may accentuate itself, and a sense of shame prevent further outrages on the beauty of the City of which they are the guardians and protectors. The successful outcry against the desecration of the Coliseum was of good augury, and so are the persistent rumours and proposals for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Quirinal and the Vatican, which are being tentatively pursued at the present time by certain political parties and in the Press.

The pained and indignant surprise with which the lover of Rome marks this improving away of its unique aspect and beauty is enhanced if he is old enough to remember the town before 1870. Then, as in a golden haze, he sees again the view from the Pincio, unmarred by the loss of its trees and by the presence of the great white buildings of the 'Giustizia' and Victor Emmanuel monument, which jar so crudely with the soft mellow tones of russet and brown and tawny orange on the time-worn cupolas and roofs, the towers and old walls, from which the great dome of St. Peter's rose in all its lofty splendour. He recalls the mingled courtliness and simplicity of its society, and sees again the white figure and ruddy good-natured face of Pio Nono, as he drives in his old-fashioned chariot, accepting a roll of white paper held up to the carriage window by some poor petitioner, or blessing a kneeling woman and her children. The chariots of the Cardinals are little less old-fashioned and elaborate than that of the Pope, and the two old footmen hanging on behind step down and follow their red-robed master when he takes his evening stroll upon the Pincio; their liveries smack of the eighteenth century; they are always white-haired, and never a match in height. As it is the custom for passers-by to salute a Cardinal, the salute is returned not only by His Eminence with a touch of his hat, but with great elaboration by the two servants, their cocked hats describing a fine semicircle. The pretty scene lives now only in the memory of a few, and on the canvas of Heilbuth's exquisite pictures—he who may be called the painter in ordinary to the Sacred College in the last days of the Temporal Power. As the Baths of Caracalla will never again inspire a poet, so the black-cassocked Cardinals in their black broughams drawn by two long-tailed black horses, their black-liveried servants, will never again inspire the brush of a painter.

If the beauty and picturesqueness of old Rome have been trampled out of sight, except in quiet bye-streets and places too humble or obscure to have attracted attention, there is still a domain—the spiritual and traditional—where the efforts of the spoilers have not prevailed. The strong current may have been partly driven underground, the great convents destroyed or turned into a post-office or barracks, the churches may have been yellow-washed and the exquisite *piazzas* in front of them disfigured—the beauty and pomp of ceremonial live unaltered within their walls. The light and splendour of colour and pageant, the play of sunshine and shadow catch the glow of gold and crimson and purple and silver, as solemn processions—no longer able to cross its portals—move in stately musical cadence round a great Basilica to the chant of many voices, the magnificent pealings of its ancient bells, through the dense mass of kneeling worshippers.

Wherever a convent garden, or part of it, has been spared, we find a scene of unequalled beauty; as at San Cosimato in the Trastevere. When we have entered, from the bare gravelled place which, until 1886, was a lovely lawn with noble elm trees opposite the church, we are in the ancient Convent of the Poor Clares, now a hospice for old men and women under the care of nuns. It was centuries old when the Poor Clares first came to it, for the outer cloisters have the graceful round-headed arches of the tenth century, and its arcades retain many fine fragments of sculpture and inscriptions. Orange and lemon trees, graceful pepper trees stand out against the background of grey wall, and a multitude of fragrant flowers and herbs, with a dark pool of lilies in the centre, complete the fascinating picture; for here time has been allowed to spare the relics of the past, and to clothe and adorn them throughout the seasons with the tender beauties of nature, fostered with pious and skilful husbandry.

There is another realm of beauty—rich and varied—the traditionary lore of Rome; its outward manifestations may have ceased, but its gates open readily to those who come to search its secrets, and contemplate its treasures, accepting the simple witness of the past, lending ear to the lovely legends which the devotion of centuries has spun around the objects of its cult and reverence. Apart from the great *festas* of the year, commemorated with all Christendom, Rome still celebrates with jubilation the anniversaries of certain of its most beloved citizens, of miraculous events in its unforgettable past. The month of March has two such dates, the 9th and the 16th, and those are happy who can lose themselves for awhile in retracing the past, and witnessing its grateful and affectionate celebration: the flavour of bygone days mingles with the incense in the swinging censers, the vision of a beautiful soul rises above the treasured relics of its earthly habitation.

Much has been written of the great lady, Francesca, wife of the noble and wealthy lord Ponziani, who died in 1440, and whose name, as Santa Francesca Romana, is held so dear and sacred in the memory of her fellow citizens, but it well bears recalling for its tender beaùty, as her *festa* returns in the springtime of the year. The gloomy Ponziani palace in the Trastevere is thrown open on the 9th of March in her honour—the only day on which women are admitted within its walls, for it is now a house of retreat for young men and boys under the care of a religious order—a destiny which would have rejoiced the heart of her whose life was dedicated to the service of her neighbours, and whose good works among the poor are still carried on by Oblates, a congregation she founded of women drawn entirely from the noble families of Rome, who labour for their own sanctification and that of their fellow men—bound by no vows, and free to leave the Convent of the Tor de Specchi at their pleasure, according to the rule of their foundress.

Donna Francesca was eminently a domestic and practical saint, devoted above all things to the duties of her station. Among the many exquisite legends that cluster round her name are those that tell of the humility and charity that led her to go disguised to her vineyard beyond the gate of San Paolo, to pick up faggots, which she would carry on her head to her poor clients in the bitter cold of winter; or how, in a time of famine, she had given away all the meal in the house, and yet the granary was found to be full when, the lady being denounced to her lord as having wasted his substance, he went in anger to examine his stores.

The most characteristic legend bears the stamp of authority, as it is mentioned in the Acts of her Canonisation. Though unwearied in her prayers, she was wont to say that 'a wife and a mother, when called upon, must quit her God at the altar, and find Him in her household duties.' Having been called away four times by her husband while reading the verses, '*Tenuisti manum dexteram meam, et in voluntate tua deduxisti me, et cum gloria suscepisti me,*'[1] she found, on returning the fifth time to her book, the words of the sentence written in letters of gold. Her attribute is therefore an angel holding a book—the Office of the B.V.M.—open at the page where the verses occur.

Except for a few lower rooms, which have been panelled, the Palazzo Ponziani must have changed very little since the Middle Ages; the walls of solid masonry are unplastered, the heavy beams, roughly daubed with paint, the stone or tiled floors and staircases, the very doors, stout enough to stand a siege, speak of the solidity and strength of the building which time has mellowed, century by century, into deeper hues of grey and black. To-day curtains of crimson fringed with gold are draped over the open doors; the crowd presses up and on, past the little gilt statue of her angel with the open book, to the room on the first floor in which Francesca died, now a chapel sumptuously decorated, bright with tapers, its bare walls covered with velvet and gold.

From dawn to midday priests succeed each other at the altar, and the stream of worshippers ebbs and flows, coming to their own Francesca Romana with their troubles and sorrows and sins, as they came to the great lady Ponziani more than four centuries ago. The devout pilgrim, following the saint's footsteps, will go from the Palazzo where she spent her married life, to the Convent of the Oblates in the Via Tor de Specchi, which she founded, and where she established herself after her husband was dead, and her children settled in life. The little Piazza is one of the few corners of Rome not yet improved away, and where may still be found, seated at their tables, in the quietest corners of the square, a couple of public letter-writers, always with an earnest client, man or woman, pouring into their ear the contents of the letter he or she feels, or is, incapable of writing. The name Tor de Specchi carries us back to the days of pagan Rome, as it very possibly commemorates the legend of the necromancer Virgilos, and his magic tower, lined with mirrors.

Grim and sombre as is the Palazzo Ponziani, so the Convent of the Oblates is full of light and movement and exquisite beauty during the eight days when the nuns throw it open to the public, that all who choose may rejoice with them in the glory of their foundress. The building is infinitely old, but it has always been cared for and loved since they came to it by these noble damsels, daughters of St. Frances, who move about its courts and cloisters in the picturesque black habit and small white muslin coif which have never varied since her day. During the Octave of the feast the pavements are strewn with box, the Great Hall, entirely painted in fresco with the life of the saint, glows with colour between the fresh green and cool arcades of the garden and the cloisters seen through the bays on either side. They are a mass of spring flowers; the sunlight touches the oranges and lemons into gold, and catches the play of a fountain. In the great vaulted kitchen we find the massive copper utensils of her day, bright as polished mirrors and still in use; and, on a table apart, filled with flowers in honour of the day, the large earthenware bowl in which she prepared ointments for the poor—who were fain to believe that the touch of her hands was more healing to their sores and wounds than the unguents she spread upon them.

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[1] Ps. lxxiii. 23, 24.

In the chapel, rich with marble and precious stones, eloquent preachers deliver the panegyric of the saint, and lecture on her life. Her little oratory and her cell, black with age but now covered with rich hangings, are held in such reverence by the nuns, that the narrow stair by which their foundress went up and down on her ceaseless errands of charity, is never used by them, save on their knees. Here are kept mementoes and relics of her life. The reverence of centuries seems to cling round the little pink silk shoes and the veil she wore at her wedding, as well as round the rough black habit and her veil as a nun, on her rare books and breviary. Here they are as she last used them 480 years ago.

Francesca lived at the Tor de Specchi till the close of her life, but she did not die there. True to her principle that a wife or a mother's first care was due to husband or children, on hearing that her eldest son, who had succeeded his father at the Palazzo Ponziani, was ill with fever, she went to nurse him. He recovered, but she caught the fever and died after a few days' illness. She was buried in the family vault in the Church of Sta. Maria Nuova—the portico of an ancient temple of Venus between the Forum and the Coliseum, turned into a Christian church by Pope Leo IV. in 850, and rebuilt, after its destruction by fire in 1216, by Honorius III. At her Canonisation by Pope Paul V. in 1608, the title was changed to that of Sta. Francesca Romana. At the same time, her incorrupt body was removed from the vault, and placed in a crystal shrine under the high altar. There is an ineffable distinction about the figure of this great lady, this great saint in her black habit and the soft draperies of her veil. The withered face, with which death has dealt with such mysterious kindness, in its calm majesty and peace, holds the eye spell-bound, and it is not hard to understand the faith of those who come during this Octave to ask her intercession and her prayers.

The *festa* on March 16th in the Palazzo Massimo delle Colonne does not commemorate a long lifetime of sanctity and devotion, but one startling miraculous event on that day in the year 1583, when Filippo Neri, the *Apostle of Rome*, like a second Elijah, raised from death to life the son of his friend Fabrizio, prince of the house of Massimo, one of the most ancient and illustrious in Rome. 'Is it true,' abruptly asked Napoleon I. of the Massimo of the time, 'that you are descended from the dictator Fabius Maximus?' 'I have no written proof, but it has been a tradition in our family for more than a thousand years.'

Young Paul Massimo was in his fourteenth year, and like many other boys in Rome, devoted to St. Philip, spending as much time in his company, it was said, as with his own family. After a long and wearisome fever, lasting sixty-five days, borne with great patience, and cheered by the daily visits of his friend, who was also his confessor, the boy died in the early morning of the March 16th. A messenger had been sent to Philip as soon as death appeared imminent, but some time was lost in finding him, and when he arrived at the palace he was met by Fabrizio, who had himself closed his son's eyes, with the words: 'Father, Paul is dead.' 'Why did you not send for me sooner?' asked the other, as he hurried into the room. The boy's *governante*, Francesca, had meanwhile brought water and a suit of clothes to lay him out; his stepmother, Violante Santa Croce, stood at the head of the bed, and there were present his tutor, his doctor, his little sisters, and several servants.

The saint prostrated himself at the boy's feet, with his face to the ground, in earnest prayer; then, rising, sprinkled him with holy water, breathed in his face, and, placing his hand on his forehead, called him twice—'Paul, Paul.' As if awaking from sleep the boy opened his eyes and answered, 'Oh, father.' Philip put a crucifix in his hand, and they conversed for about half an hour about his mother, Lavinia, who had been dead eight years, and his sister Giulia, a nun at the Tor de Specchi, who had died the previous January. His voice was clear and sonorous, his movements free, the pallor of death had given place to the hues of perfect health, and he looked as if he had never been ill. 'Father, I had forgotten a sin,' he suddenly said, upon which the Prince and the other persons retired, and Philip heard his confession. What follows we find in Prince Massimo's written declaration. When the awed witnesses had returned they heard the following dialogue:

'"Didst thou die willingly?" "Yes," and the boy added that he wished to go and see his mother and sister in Paradise. Then the blessed father, in my presence, gave him his benediction, and extended his hand over the forehead of the said Paul, saying: "Go, for thou art blessed, and pray God for me." As soon as these words were uttered, the boy sank back into Francesca's arms and with a placid countenance . . . . gently returned to death.'

Except in war time, the event has been celebrated year by year in that grand old palace, the scene of many crimes, and of this miracle. Paul Massimo's death-chamber was at once converted into a chapel, the chief altar on the spot where stood his bed; a silver statuette of St. Philip stands above it, and of the two side altars, one is dedicated to the Madonna, the other to Sta. Francesca Romana, the whole rich with precious marbles and paintings, intaglios of pietra-dura, agate and jasper. Until 1870, many Popes had visited the chapel and enriched it with Indulgences and relics. Gregory XIV. was there on March 16, 1839, and raised it to the rank of a public church: Pius IX. granted it the privilege of a *Messa Propria*.

The whole day long the palace is open to the public: the crowd is a less homely one than at Sta. Francesca Romana, for it consists chiefly of the *élite* of Roman society with a mixture, of course, of the populace; for nowhere do all ranks mingle in equality as in an Italian church.

Time has wrought its changes, even on this old-world celebration. Before the Great War it was a scene of some splendour: the magnificent hall-porter with his heavy silver chain and badge and his seven-foot halberd guarded the entrance lodge surrounded by his admirers; tall footmen in the Massimo livery of dove-colour and crimson, profusely laced, lined the staircases and galleries. Now a dapper chauffeur stands in the lodge, and plain-clothes waiters and a carabiniere or two are there to marshal the visitors. The family is in mourning for its chief, but it is doubtful whether the old fashions will ever return again.

M. H.

THE SENTIMENTALISTS.

BY J. D. BERESFORD.

I.

Kenneth Drews had known Mrs. Bradley for more than five years before she so wonderfully 'came into his life.' He could remember, most fortunately, his first sight of her. He had been on his afternoon round, visiting some of his 'club' patients out towards Melford, and he was driving home in that mood of depression which had even then begun to influence his attitude towards life. It had been a dull day in early November, with occasional intervals of cold, sleety rain, and the whole flat country around Bennington had spoken to him of the dreariness and monotony of his existence. He had turned his face towards the town, hating his profession, reflecting on the unquestionable facts that he was overworked and underpaid, that his time was never his own—at any hour of the night he might be summoned to take up again the weary round of his professional duties—and that, finally and most cogently, his home life offered no relief of happiness, even of contentment, to dissipate for a time the gloom of his occupation.

It seemed to him afterwards that that typical drive of his, one of a hundred such that had differed in no essential particular, had held some peculiar quality that had impressed itself on his memory. He remembered, so he told Eva Bradley all those years later, how he had come to the black realisation of his failure as a man, and how he had in a fit of rare anger slashed at the grey mare, and had then discovered that she was going lame again in the near foreleg—another cause for despair, inasmuch as it portended long winter rides on a bicycle over those terrible clay roads about Bennington.

'I really think,' Drews confessed, 'that at that moment I touched the depths of despair.' 'And then,' he always continued, 'I saw *you*.'

But he had gilded the whole incident in retrospect, had come to relate it to all the glory that had come five years afterwards, and had lost his sense of the dull aspect that the real occurrence had presented.

The plain facts and the impression they had made upon him had been no matter for romance at the time.

He had almost reached the outskirts of Bennington when he had unwarrantably thrashed the grey mare, and he slowed her down to the merest amble when he made that confounded discovery of her lameness. Drews was not a man to let his passion dominate him; the moment that new trouble approached, he met it with that resigned patience with which he had met all his miseries. Another man might have slashed the unoffending mare again, in the fury of his despair; Drews took measures, when it was too late to stave off the threatened evil.

So it chanced that he came into town on the Melford road at little more than a walk, and had plenty of time to notice that the new tenants were moving into 'The Laurels,' the only house of any importance on that side of Bennington.

And Mrs. Bradley had been at the front gate. She had had her hat and furs on, and she had looked up at Drews as he passed with the ghost of a frown on her pale face.

He made much of that first look of hers when he recalled the incidents of the miraculous afternoon, but he never confessed—probably he had completely forgotten—that the chief thought in his mind at the time was a speculation as to whether the Bradleys were well off, and the hope that Mrs. Bradley might require his professional services. He had instantly diagnosed her as 'delicate,' and had found confirmation in his regard of her eldest daughter—the thin-legged, dark-eyed Nora, a child of nine years old, then—who had come out into the front garden as he passed.

This was all the circumstance of their first meeting, but it was wonderfully lighted when they recalled it, and it would seem as if some strange quality of recognition must have lifted it from the routine of Drews' monotonous round, or why should the scene have remained with him so clearly after five years?

The interval offered no other such bright moments of sudden consciousness to stand out as salient events in their movement towards the inevitable. They remembered occasions—the Vicarage garden party, the concert in the town hall, or the Jubilee sports—at which they acknowledged that they *must* have met; but the sheer fact of any encounter had been submerged in the wide lake of other, apparently, more urgent impressions. He had figured to her as the doctor whose services she hoped that she might not require, and to him she had seemed to be no more than the unfortunate wife of that man, Philip Bradley.

Drews, indeed, had small excuse for having taken so little notice of her, since her husband had provided Bennington with more subject for discussion than it had had since the classic affair of the junior curate and Mrs. Erskine. But Drews was naturally an unobservant man, little interested in gossip or in the wonderful underlying stimulus of life, and he had not had the curiosity specially to observe the wife of the man who was reputed, by common exaggeration, a hard drinker and evil liver.

And in all those five years there had been no call for him at 'The Laurels.' His hopeful diagnosis had been belied by the facts. Neither Mrs. Bradley nor either of her little daughters had needed medical advice, and the traditional luck of the drunkard stayed with her husband until he met with the accident that was to affect so remarkably the interests of three lives.

That interval marked, perhaps, the dullest period of all Kenneth Drews' dull existence. He was coming within sight of fifty, and growing used to the realisation of his failure. The thought no longer stirred him to slash the mare, nor to any more vigorous acknowledgment of the realisation than a shrug of the shoulders and a grim smile. He would go on to the end, he supposed, just as he was going now: on a precarious income that barely sufficed to keep him out of debt; with no hope for the future or joy in the past; bound irrevocably by conventional chains to the nonentity of a wife between whom and himself there had been no pretence of anything but a tepid forbearance for more than a decade.

He accepted it all as a part of the deadly scheme of life—until the star fell.

II.

It was, strangely enough, Philip Bradley who so described the harbinger, but there was no single piece of corroborative evidence to uphold his statement; and the Vicar, who was an ardent amateur of astronomy, declared that he was taking observations that night and must have seen any meteor of such importance as that which figured in Bradley's story. Moreover, neither the sufferer's wife nor his doctor believed in that star until afterwards. Drews' conversion took nearly a fortnight, but he was in an unduly prejudiced condition of mind when he first heard the story.

He was called up after midnight, a thing to which he had never become reconciled, by a youth of sixteen, whose word Drews doubted. He leaned out of the window and parleyed—not too graciously.

'Mr. Bradley—at "The Laurels,"' shouted the boy, in answer to the curt, half-incredulous 'Who d'ye say ? Who ?' that was snapped at him. He was full of the enthusiasms and excitements that burn the heart of youth, and fresh from the scene of the tragedy—as it seemed to him—he expected an instant response to his enormous tidings, some show of sympathetic eagerness not less than his own.

'He's broken his leg,' he said, and then, searching his mind for some more startling truth, he added, 'and his head. At least, he's stunned. I was to say you were to come at once.'

'Oh ! very well, very well. I'll come,' returned Drews. 'You needn't wait.' 'The Laurels' was nearly a mile from his own house, and it was raining.

It took him a quarter of an hour to dress and put his instruments together, but when he came out into the night he found the messenger still waiting. 'I thought I'd better,' was the only explanation he vouchsafed; but it was sufficient to show Drews that he was suspected of malingering. The circumstances did not predispose him to bend a sympathetic ear to the story of Philip Bradley, fully recovered from his unconsciousness by the time the doctor arrived, accompanied by the faithful messenger, who evidently had intended to see that there should be no backsliding—he was, it appeared, a nephew of the Bradleys, and was staying with them for his Christmas holidays.

Drews' first sight of the inside of 'The Laurels' came as a surprise to him—he had not anticipated so well-furnished a house—and it induced in him a sudden sense of his own shabbiness.

Mrs. Bradley met him in the hall—they counted it, later, as their second 'real meeting,' those other possible occasions were of such doubtful value. She had had no time to change the long white wrapper she had hastily flung about herself when the news had been brought, and her hair hung in a long thick plait to her waist. She looked astonishingly young and slender, and her dark eyes were full of a wonderful sadness and fear.

'My husband has had a serious accident,' she said. 'He was thrown out of the dog-cart, just at the gate here. The horse was frightened by. . . .' She hesitated, and a faint colour pulsed in her face for a moment. 'The horse took fright at something,' she concluded—though she often denied that she ever doubted the coming of the star.

The patient in the dining-room, stretched out full length on the hearthrug and holding his thigh tightly with two strong hands, was not so reticent. He had unquestionably been sobered by pain and shock, but he was redolent of whiskey, and something of the intoxication still lingered about him. He began to talk eagerly directly the doctor entered the room.

'Most amazing thing, doctor,' he said, and entered at once into a description of the unprecedented meteor that had trailed a smear of fire across the sky and burst with a loud report, almost, as it seemed, within a few yards of 'The Laurels' gate—enough surely to startle any horse.

His wife interposed to stem the flood of his explanation. Drews noticed a quiet reserve about her, even as he knelt to examine the injured thigh of his patient; mentally, he classified her among the women who would make good nurses—not without a damaging reflection on the well-meaning fussiness of his own wife in the sick-room.

A simple fracture of the femur was his diagnosis of the most clamant injury under his hands, further than that he found a contused wound on the top of the skull and a few bruises of small account. His immediate concern was, plainly, to set the broken bone, an operation for which he needed assistance; but whatever Mrs. Bradley's qualifications for a hospital nurse, this was evidently beyond her powers of accomplishment. She showed signs of faintness at the very suggestion, and it was the sturdy nephew who, steadfastly controlling his qualms, held his uncle while the two ends of the bone were brought together by the exercise of all Drews' physical force.

Bradley himself, it may be noted, displayed admirable forbearance in his agony. If the man had soaked and lived evilly, as the gossips said, there must originally have been good stuff in him. . . .

From the very beginning, that accident made a difference in Drews' life. At first it increased his practice. So many people in Bennington were curious about the Bradleys, eager to know why they had kept themselves so aloof from the social life of the town—the mere fact that Bradley drank seemed insufficient to explain his wife's seclusion, they thought. And now the gossips were on tiptoe to learn the real cause of the accident, and Drews was the only person who could satisfy them. They made excuses to call him in.

Drews' attitude gave all the effect of professional diplomacy, but it was not truly an expression of qualifications, so admirable in a country doctor. The simple explanation of his apparent tact was that he, himself, lacked curiosity: he had made no effort to discover any secret in the house on the Melford road, and he was annoyed by the questions that were thrust at him without hesitation or reserve.

'Really, I hardly know,' was his stereotyped form of reply to the equally stereotyped inquiry. 'Mr. Bradley says that something frightened the cob—a meteor, he told me. I know the Vicar says that there wasn't one that night, but he is quite likely to have missed it, I should think.' And then he was usually called upon to add by way of reply to some more discreetly phrased cross-examination: 'No, he certainly wasn't drunk when I saw him. He might have been drinking, but he was perfectly sober then.'

He had given this explanation in precisely the same form to his wife, and she was too apathetic to invent any story on her own account. The gossips certainly went unsatisfied so far as the Drews were concerned, but this sheer accident of his reticence was the third step that brought Eva Bradley into his life.

III.

After that second sight of her in her long white wrapper, and with that thick rope of hair hanging to her waist, Drews had become aware of a faint interest in her personality. He had even wondered in an absent-minded way whether she had had a bad time with Bradley. He saw her every day now, but his speculation had not ripened. For a moment she had shone in an arresting setting, a pale figure of a woman differentiated by dress and circumstance from the women of his everyday experience. If she had been a patient, she would have had no effect upon him; Drews, by his training, had come to regard patients with an unspeculative eye. They were, in some inexplicable way, oddly sacrosanct.

But, after that one imperfect vision of her, he had fallen back into his routine observations, his dull sight of all life as part of an uninteresting, ordered procession of events, that were quite mechanically alike in kind. Eva Bradley was already becoming the mere wife of a perhaps more than usually satisfactory patient —judged by a financial standard—when she stepped out of the background for a third time to startle him into some sort of vitality.

It was a fortnight after Bradley's accident, and Drews was fastening his trouser clips in the hall of 'The Laurels,' when she came downstairs. He expected the usual inquiry with regard to her husband's progress, and was ready with his *cliché*, when she said:

'May I speak to you for a moment?'

She led the way into the dining-room, and he followed her, putting on his gloves as he went.

'I want to thank you,' she began.

He was fairly well used to such expressions, although they were rarer now than they had once been.

'Oh! that's nothing,' he returned with a touch of brusqueness that had always covered his self-consciousness. 'It was quite a straightforward case—no complications. Anyone . . .'

'I didn't mean that,' she interrupted; 'although, of course, I *am* grateful about that too . . . but this . . . it was about your . . . your loyalty.'

He looked his failure to comprehend.

'Of course it's nothing to *you*,' she went on quickly, nervously. 'As a doctor, *you* would respect the confidence of your patients. But it hasn't always happened to me like that. . . .'

He was subtly flattered. She had made, by her timid stress on the pronoun, a distinction between him and the average practitioner. Already he saw that he had exercised a fine tact in saying nothing to Bennington of the private affairs of 'The Laurels.' His sluggish curiosity was feebly stirred, not to guess the secret she had so plainly admitted to exist, but to find out how this record of his splendid silence had reached her.

'Every medical man,' he said, 'must respect the confidence of his patients,' and without replying to the incredulous shake of her head—what was it to him that he should defend the honour of his profession?—he added: 'But how, in this particular case . . I mean, why do you bother to thank me?'

It appeared that the anæmic Nora went to the High School, and had brought back some story of Drews' reticence. Mothers had spoken unwisely before their young daughters, and the upshot of the tittle-tattle, in this case, had been reported in the form that 'Dr. Drews was as tight as wax.' Furthermore, Nora had overheard a more intriguing report to the effect that 'Of course Drews knew something, or he wouldn't be so close about it.'

The latter formula was paraphrased by Mrs. Bradley at this interview. 'You couldn't help guessing, of course . . .' she hesitated, increasing the burden of confidence.

'Really, I don't think so,' Drews replied with some little confusion. He had carefully buttoned his gloves, and now proceeded to take them off again with no less attention to detail. 'As a matter of fact, I never do guess anything about the private affairs of my patients. I—I feel that it doesn't concern me.'

'No, *you* would feel like that about it,' she said, and once more gave him a glimpse of some pedestal she had made that set him above his fellow-men.

'No, no, really,' he protested, 'any doctor . . .'

She smiled a delightful smile of denial. 'I mustn't keep you,' she said, and held out her hand.

He took it with a sense of pleasure in the knowledge that some freak of fate had induced him to remove his glove.

'But I *am* grateful,' she added; and for a moment her hand grasped his with an added warmth. He felt it as a hand that was soft and firm, but, above all, as a hand that admired him.

A glow stayed with him as he bicycled on out over the heavy roads towards Melford. Something of his mediocrity seemed to have fallen away; his life and his personality were suddenly seen in a new aspect, and appeared, however incomprehensibly, to be less commonplace than he had supposed. She had penetrated the wrappings of discontent with himself and his surroundings that had shut him out from any intercourse with beauty; given him a cause for pride—he saw, now, what he had never seen before, that he had been 'loyal,' any and every confidence had always been safe with him. The recognition came as a surprise, a discovery. He had taken himself too much for granted; he might be a failure and a mediocrity, but at least he had been loyal. Yes, even to his wife. No one had ever heard him complain; he had never confided his discontent to anyone. And how strange that this woman, almost unknown to him, should be the first person to reveal him to himself! She must have quicker sight, more delicate intuitions than the dull, blind creatures with whom he had lived so long. He remembered his first sight of her standing at the gate of 'The Laurels,' four—no, five—years ago; even then, surely, he had distinguished her from the crowd of stupid women he met every day. There was some quality of distinction about her, some splendid freshness of mind unsoiled by her years of trial. . . .

He went to 'The Laurels' next day with a quicker pulse, with a sense of anticipation, almost of adventure; he saw himself no longer as the dull country doctor, but as a man with a certain special virtue appreciated and admired only by this one woman whom he would certainly see in a few minutes' time. He felt that while he was with her the load of his oppression must always, now, be lifted; he would be reinvigorated, he would be in some curious way stronger and younger.

She met him frankly, and when his customary examination of his patient—somewhat prolonged on this occasion—was over, she drew him again into the dining-room and they talked for a few minutes of her husband's illness, of the weather, and then superficially and discursively of Bennington. She made no further reference to his loyalty, and all their talk was quite impersonal, but through it all he was conscious of some admiration for him that neither her words nor her manner definitely expressed,—some hint of deference for his opinions, it may have been; or some look in her dark eyes.

And day by day he looked forward more and more eagerly to those few minutes alone with her. That visit had become the focus of his orbit. In his mind, all his day was arranged with reference to his sight of Eva Bradley—such and such a call was to be paid before or after his call at 'The Laurels.'

Yet, during the ten days that followed her first tribute to his loyalty, he never thought of himself as being in love with her. She was an encouragement, a tonic, a force that gave him confidence in himself and made his work seem more worthy. He never went beyond that, never speculated on the possibility of any relation between them, other than that of the splendid friendship which they had, as yet, hardly acknowledged. All his circumstances, all his life, forbade any thought of passion—the idea was so unthinkable that he never thought of it even when they came to an open avowal.

IV.

That, in some form, was inevitable; and ten days brought them to speech.

They had been talking of her husband, whose progress towards recovery could not be pronounced as entirely satisfactory. His broken leg, still in splints, gave him little pain and was certainly healing, but he was strangely apathetic, feeble.

'He has altered so,' Mrs. Bradley confessed, hesitatingly, to Drews in the dining-room.

'In what way?' he asked, admitting that he, too, had been slightly puzzled.

'He is a little queer, in some ways,' she said—'not himself.' She coloured with that quick, fleeting blush of hers, and looked down at the carpet. 'He used to be so—so noisy, you know,' she said.

It was a confession, and Drews knew it, of a part of the tragedy of uncongeniality that existed between her and her husband. Drews recognised something of Bradley's roughness, coarseness, and at the same moment felt a warm realisation of the fact—the suggestion had surely been implicit in her speech—that he, himself, was certainly never 'noisy.'

He drew his gloves softly through his hands. 'It must be a relief to you,' he murmured.

She nodded silently. 'If you think . . .' she began.

'Oh! I don't think you need worry about that,' he answered her. 'The shock and the pain and so forth would be sufficient to account for his quietness. As soon as he's up and about . . .'

'It will all begin again?' She looked up and met his eyes with the plain confession of her burden written in her glance.

He beat his gloves gently on his hand. 'And for me, too,' he said, his heart throbbing at the courage of so great an admission.

'You have your work,' she said.

'If you could know how I'd come to loathe it,' he returned; 'all the deadness and monotony of it, the place and the people—until ten days ago.'

That faint blush flickered again in her cheek. 'I wondered if you knew,' she said.

He stammered and looked down. 'I don't know that I *knew* till to-day,' he mumbled, and his voice was so indistinct that, although she bent eagerly towards him, she could not catch his words.

'To-day ?' she repeated, the only word she had heard definitely. She was greedy to drink the full significance of his speech, but some sense of the occasion forbade her to beg a repetition.

He nodded, still hiding his eyes from her. 'It seemed so impossible,' he said.

She saw that his admission, whatever it had been, was slipping away from her, and made a last effort to grasp it.

'Why was it less impossible to-day ?' she murmured, in a tone that had some devotional quality.

'It wasn't,' he said. 'It seems still quite impossible to me. I can't understand what *you* . . .' His mumbled statement of perplexity dropped to some inaudible confession. He cleared his throat and fidgeted with his gloves. He was not so much conscious of his ineptitude as of the astounding daring of the admissions he had made.

She was no more practised in such embarrassments than he, but her wit found a phrase that definitely placed their relations.

'We couldn't help it,' she said, still on that low, devotional note. 'We've just come into one another's lives.' And then she added, 'I think the star that fell must have been our star.'

'Yes,' he said, and then, conscious for the first time that he was failing to touch any climax, he repeated her phrase with a subdued awe that echoed her quality of devotion. 'It must have been our star,' he said solemnly.

He made no attempt to kiss her, nor did she seem to expect it, but a certain effect of heroism about their parting hand-clasp was a sufficient recognition of the fact that they had finally come into each other's lives. . . .

After this emotional confession, they rarely spoke of the immense secret they shared between them. Neither of them found it necessary to state explicitly the obvious reasons why they should contain their passion within the bounds so clearly marked out at that one intense interview. The fact that nothing more than this could ever come of their devotion to each other was accepted as something beyond any possibility of denial. Meanwhile 'they knew,' as Mrs. Bradley put it once, when their emotions surged for a moment over the bank of conventional conversation with which they dammed their need for dangerous expression. And this 'knowing,' this perfect trust in each other's unfathomable devotion, was enough for both of them. They carried that knowledge with them as they went about their dull affairs, and it glowed, and was reflected from every aspect of their monotonous lives, as it were a soft, deep light that coloured and transfigured the meanest object of their intercourse when they faced the unrealities of every day.

She was more tender to her husband because of it; Drews was more patient with his wife.

V.

Fate, in a sense, was kind to them. It had, in the first instance, discharged a star out of the unthinkable immensities of timeless space, aimed to explode at one precise spot and at one determined instant, in order that they might be brought together. And at rare intervals Fate continued to occupy itself with the same supreme task.

The next evidence was exhibited in the continued illness of Philip Bradley. His leg was healed, but the curious disability of mind that had overtaken him persisted, and was accompanied by a growing tendency towards paralysis. He did not appear unhappy, he made no show of discontent; but he was apathetic, evincing no desire to get on his feet again, although he often spoke of that effort as if it would certainly be made in the near future.

Drews was puzzled. He often discussed her husband's case with Mrs. Bradley, but he took no drastic measures to confirm his own hesitating diagnosis. He guessed that the fracture of Bradley's skull—healed now, outwardly—had been more serious than he had at first supposed; but they quibbled and procrastinated, and continually postponed the calling in of another opinion.

'Possibly an operation,' Drews would say—'trephining, you know—there may be a slight pressure on the brain . . .' and then they would both look anxious and worried.

'If you think we ought, of course . . .' she would reply, and having agreed upon the necessity, they would decide to 'see how he was to-morrow.'

And Philip Bradley's decline was so infinitely slow that when to-morrow came he often appeared to be 'slightly better,' and a fortnight might pass before the question of 'another opinion' was raised once more.

It was not that either Eva Bradley or Kenneth Drews had any conscious wish to keep her husband confined to his own room. As time went on, they might almost have welcomed his return to normal activity as something that would put a new barrier between them and re-arouse the dramatic interest of their conscientious and admirable restraint. But they hesitated too long over the initiative; and came by subtle, unrealised steps to accept the fact that her husband was a chronic invalid, just as they had come by the pressure of long-unrecognised influence to accept the necessity for a physical morality—a necessity that neither of them had, from the first, ever questioned.

Nevertheless that dull red glow of happiness still burned within them, and the little necessities for subterfuge kept the flame alight. Drews' visits to 'The Laurels' became less frequent—he could hardly find a decent excuse for visiting his patient more than twice a week—but they discovered a new source of joy in the Sunday services which both of them had always religiously attended.

Formerly Eva Bradley had worshipped at All Saints' on the Melford side of the town, but six months after her husband's accident she went one morning to the parish church of St. Peter, and sat within sight of Drews and his wife, although on the other side of the nave. And after that she rented a sitting at St. Peter's, and they could catch an occasional glimpse of one another during morning and evening service. Without speaking of the thing in words, they came to an agreement whereby at two defined moments during each service they could meet one another's eyes for the fraction of a second. Neither of them changed their expressions during that brief recognition of each other's thought; if the glance had been noted by the most critical Bennington gossip, it must have been passed as the conventional stare, permitted during the hours of worship. But cold as was their regard of each other, this exchange of glances served them. 'They knew,' and nothing more was needed to warm them into joy of their hidden delight, unless it was the blessed consciousness, so strong in them in that place and at those times, that they were strong in virtue—that, despite all temptation, their consciences were free of the least offence. . . .

And when Fate, still interested in these two devoted souls, again interposed, and Drews' wife died rather suddenly of pneumonia two years after Bradley's accident, it seemed that the conditions were little altered. Drews' practice had been falling away for some time—a younger and more energetic doctor had settled in Bennington—and he had saved no money.

Apart from that most vital question of conscience, it was plain that they dared risk no scandal. He was dependent upon his little professional income; she on the paralytic husband, whose moral hold upon her, moreover, had grown rather than diminished since he had been confined to his bed. Finally, there were her two children—Nora grown now into a rather pretty girl of sixteen. Even if their cherished virtue had not stood between them, these were reasons enough to keep them apart.

But they came near to speech of all these things once, soon after Mrs. Drews died—in the familiar room that had heard all the confidences they had ever exchanged. He had spoken doubtfully of her husband, who was so patently weaker that day . . . 'although he might live for years,' Drew concluded.

She looked up at him, and he returned her glance; for an instant they were held in one of their rare moments of confessional understanding. The message of their eyes spoke the thing that had never been named between them.

'But we must not think of that, ever,' she said, and turned a little away from him. 'It would spoil it all, now, if we were ever so little impatient. We must have confidence in our star.'

He nodded his patient approval of her statement, looking down again at the hearthrug, so associated now in his mind with these delicious intervals of rest from the worry of his drudging life.

'Oh yes, we must wait,' he mumbled. 'I'm satisfied. The knowledge that you . . . that we . . . that things are as they are, is enough. It helps me through everything.'

'And me,' she concluded devotionally.

It was very rarely that they permitted themselves such an overt reference to their wonderful secret.

And Fate slumbered, again, for three long years before it carried away the soul of Philip Bradley.

VI.

After his necessary intervention in the business of the funeral, Drews waited for six decent weeks before he called at 'The Laurels.'

He was shabbier than ever, and became more conscious still of his shabbiness when he was shown into the drawing-room, a room he had hardly seen, and one that contained no memories of brief, stolen interviews with the woman between whom and himself only one barrier now remained.

She kept him waiting there for ten minutes, and when she came she was subdued, reserved, he thought. Her weeds suited her, throwing up the pure outlines of her pale face. She looked delicately fragile, and he remembered his first instinctive diagnosis when he had seen her standing at the gate.

They were both constrained. Their hesitating conversation fluttered over the uninteresting topics of the neighbourhood, and presently she spoke of going away for a time, to Italy. She said she thought her two girls ought to see Italy while they were still young.

He agreed. 'It will do them and you good to have a change,' he said. He was thinking of the barrier that was still set up between them. She was a comparatively rich woman, they had learned—'left much better off than she had expected,' the gossips said—and he was poorer than he had ever been. He felt that to ask her to marry him, now, would be to put himself in the light of a fortune-hunter. That, indeed, would be a tragic ending to the perfect romance which had upheld him for five dreary years.

'I don't suppose we should be away for more than three months,' she said—'until the spring, perhaps.'

'You were thinking of coming back here?' he asked.

'Not to "The Laurels," she told him; 'to Bennington, perhaps. I don't know. I can't decide yet.' She looked up at him quickly, and looked away again. He thought her glance a little apprehensive, as if she feared that he might be indiscreet, might make some reference to the great secret they had nursed so carefully.

He got up and stood on the unfamiliar drawing-room hearthrug. 'In any case, you'll come back to Bennington for a time, after the Italian tour?' he asked, with an air of definitely postponing all that he might have to say.

'Oh *yes*,' she said emphatically, as if in quick agreement to his postponement. 'Oh, of course, we shall come back for a time.'

He was aware of a feeling of relief. They had understood one another, once more, so perfectly. This tacit agreement to wait three months had been so delightfully of a piece with all their silent communions. There was, surely, no need of words between them—they knew. . . .

And when she had gone and he had taken up the old routine, he was not conscious of any particular loneliness. He never passed 'The Laurels,' standing empty now, and vacant, without tender thoughts of all that that house had meant to him; the light within still glowed as of old. He did not doubt that, far away in Italy, she thought of him, that she also kept warm the sacred fire of their wonderful secret.

They wrote to each other at fairly long intervals—discreet, uninteresting letters—and in April he learned that she and her two girls were going to Germany for the summer to complete Nora's education. He was not disappointed. He realised that he had become a little nervous about her impending return. Her money loomed so largely between them.

But during that summer, Fate, looking back upon them, as if by an afterthought made good its one omission. Drews' brother, long since migrated to America and forgotten, died a widower and childless, and left a very sufficient competence to his only living relation.

At fifty-two, Kenneth Drews, the beggarly country practitioner, found himself independent, the master of what seemed to him a lordly income, and with no obstacle left between him and the woman he had loved so devotedly and so reticently for more than five years. He understood, suddenly, that he was bound now, in honour, to search her out, to complete their lives.

Strangely, the realisation brought no throb of anticipation, such as he had once had at the thought of seeing her on his daily visit to the house on the Melford road. That sweet understanding between them had been delicate, tender, romantic, of another quality altogether than this brutal, matter-of-fact relation of marriage. Nevertheless, he decided to seek her in Dresden, and to give her no hint till then either of his changed future or of his coming.

He went in November. All their most intimate moments had been associated in his mind with the autumn and winter months; but another reason for his delay was an unspoken desire to see first something of the countries that she had lived in since she left Bennington. He did not want to appear before her as the commonplace country doctor she had known in all their intercourse: he wished, as it were, to come up to her new level.

So he spent three months in France, Switzerland, and Italy before he made his unannounced call upon her in the big Dresden pension.

VII.

She received him on a note of glad surprise, but he suspected an artificiality in her welcome, as if, even now, she felt that he came too soon.

He began by explaining the wonderful change in his circumstances.

‘Oh! I'm so glad,’ she said—‘so glad that you are released from all that grey routine that had become so wearisome to you.’

‘It isn't only that,’ he said, dropping his voice, determined, now, to speak all that he had suppressed for nearly six years. ‘It isn't only that.’

She made no attempt to check him. ‘You mean that we . . .’ she began.

‘I mean that, at last, I . . .’ he said, and found that he had nothing more to say. All the glorious ardour that had, as he believed, burned in him so long, had fed upon itself until only a mere wraith of it remained. There was no longer anything within him that cried for expression. All the adorations and thoughts he had had of her seemed stale and worn by use, although they had never been spoken; they had, as it were, bled internally, and the life had gone from them. He looked at her and realised horribly that, all unnoticed, the light had gone out. . . .

But his honour remained. He must blow upon the dead embers, must simulate an eagerness he no longer felt. He must, before all, never permit her to guess that there was any change in him.

‘I mean that, at last, I am really free,’ he said.

‘Yes, we are free,’ she echoed quietly.

‘There is no barrier now,’ he said.

‘No physical barrier,’ she assented.

‘Will you marry me?’ he asked desperately.

‘I think it would be better not,’ she said, and he knew that he was glad.

‘But why not?’ he asked, honourably.

She looked down at her slim, white hands. ‘Our love has been such a beautiful thing,’ she said, ‘so sacred, so precious, so beautifully pure. I feel that it would be sacrilege to acknowledge it to the world. Can't we go on as we are? Can't we see one another sometimes, and feel still, as we have always felt, that we *know*, and that nothing else could ever be sweeter than that ? '

He saw the solution of all his difficulties in her statement. ' I understand,' he said. ' I feel that, too. We have always understood one another.'

' Always,' she agreed.

' Almost *completely*.'

' *Almost* completely.'

A little silence fell upon them. They thought that they had deceived each other into the belief that the light still burned, but each knew that the light had gone out in both of them—if it had ever truly burned at all !

BUFF AND BLUE.

BY SIR HENRY LUCY.

Old Whig Toast: Buff and Blue
And Mrs. Crewe.
Mrs. Crewe drinks: Buff and Blue
And all of you.

In October 1802 the 'Edinburgh Review, a Critical Journal,' was published simultaneously in Edinburgh and London with promise of reappearance quarterly. Amongst the men responsible for its production, fulfilment of the pledge was not confidently expected. In the spring of the year made memorable by the great event, Francis Jeffrey, first editor, wrote to a friend:

> 'Our Review has been postponed until September, and I am afraid it will not go on with much spirit even then. We are bound for a year to the booksellers, and shall drag through that for our own indemnification.'

For himself he is comforted by the reflection that he is bound by his engagement 'only for the first four numbers; and,' he adds, 'I hardly expect the Review itself to have a much longer life.'

He was agreeably disappointed. Lord Cockburn, his biographer, writing half a century later from personal recollection, recorded that

> 'The effect of the first number was electrical. Instead of expiring, as many wished in their first efforts, the force of the shock was increased by each subsequent discharge. It is impossible for those who did not live at the time to feel or understand the anxieties with which its motions were observed.'

In the spring of 1802 a group of men, mostly young, used to gather in Jeffrey's room to discuss a project whose early begetter was Sydney Smith. In addition to these two were Brougham, Francis Horner, and John A. Murray, afterwards Lord Murray. Sydney Smith was just over thirty years of age; Jeffrey just under that happy meridian. Horner was 24, and Brougham 23.

The first business of the budding staff was to select a motto for the Journal. Jeffrey suggested: 'We cultivate literature upon a little oatmeal.' It was suggested that this was too near the truth to be desirable, and on further consultation the quotation from Publilius Syrus which has graced the blue cover for nearly 120 years was selected : 'Judex damnatur cum nocens absolvitur.' The form and colour of the Journal, buff and blue—the Whig fighting colours—are the same to-day as when the Review was launched.

Of the first number only 750 copies were printed : within half a dozen years the sale had increased by thousands. At the outset it was arranged that the writers should receive no remuneration. Long in advance of the periodical Pendennis edited, the Review was to be written by gentlemen for gentlemen who scorned the vulgar allurement of pay. The third number showing a continued increase of sales and net profits, this delicacy of feeling was cast aside. An arrangement was made whereby the editor received £200 a year, contributors £10 a sheet. Lord Byron hearing of this inserted in 'English Bards and Scotch Reviewers' the spiteful couplet—

'To Jeffrey go, the silent and discreet;
His pay is just ten sterling pounds a sheet.'

Easy is the descent to Avernus. Having once tasted the sweetness of quarterly pay, the young men, anticipating the action of a modern House of Commons, voted themselves an increase of pay to the amount of sixteen guineas a sheet. For this sum Gladstone was, fifty years ago, content, perhaps pleased, to contribute an article. In 1885 I was commissioned by a leading American magazine to approach him with an offer of a hundred guineas for an article that need not necessarily exceed two thousand words. My mission was fruitless.

I wonder how many people could name the occasion and the circumstances under which Gladstone made his historic reference to 'the streak of silver sea' by which the dispensation of Providence cut Great Britain off from contiguity with continental nations ? The general opinion, which I confess I shared, is that the phrase flashed through a speech in the House of Commons. I find it in an article in an early number of the 'Edinburgh.'

The period was that of the war between Germany and France, resulting in the overthrow of the French Empire. 'What,' Gladstone asked, 'will be our share, as a member of the European family, of the consequences ?' He answered :

'It will be our own fault if they are anything but good and useful. Happy England! Happy not because any Immaculate Conception exempted her from that original sin of nations, the desire to erect Will into Right, and the lust of territorial aggrandisement. Happy not only because she is *Felix prole virum*, because the United Kingdom is peopled by a race unsurpassed as a whole in its energies and endowments. But happy, with special reference to the present subject, in this, that the wise dispensation of Providence has cut her off by that streak of silver sea—which passengers so often and so justly execrate—though in no way from the duties and the honours, yet partly from the dangers, absolutely from the temptations, which attend upon the local neighbourhood of the continental nations.'

The long-forgotten article is notable for two other points. One, the declaration that 'Ireland, our ancient reproach, can no longer fling her grievances in the face of Great Britain'—a sanguine view of the future, certainly not confirmed by events of the current year. The other, a remarkable forecast of the League of Nations.

'We should do as we would be done by,' Gladstone wrote in 1870. 'We should seek to found a moral empire upon the confidence of the nations, not upon their fears, their passions, or their antipathies. Certain it is that a new law of nations is gradually taking hold of the mind, and aiming to sway the practice of the world; a law which recognises independence, which frowns upon aggression, which favours the pacific rule, which aims at permanent, not temporary, adjustments; above all, which recognises as a tribunal of paramount authority the general judgment of civilised mankind.'

This is not the only or the first article contributed by Gladstone to the Review. In 1867 he penned a review of 'The Session and its Sequel.' He scornfully alluded to the fact that whereas two years earlier Disraeli had thrown out a moderate Reform Bill, introduced by Lord Russell, on the ground that it was far too democratic, he had himself carried a measure going beyond the extreme of radical principles. He had thus destroyed the credit of his party with the country. Authority, Gladstone urged, can never long be severed from public esteem and confidence, and of these the session of 1867 had, he asserted, robbed the Tory party. The day of retribution was near: 'the moral of the session lies in fresh proofs that parties, like individuals, can only enjoy a solid prosperity by building on the rock of honour, truth, and the confidence they alone engender.' His view of the effect of

Disraeli's tactics upon the public mind was speedily and fully realised.

Two months later there took place a General Election that drove Disraeli and his followers from power, and established Gladstone in office with a majority of 120.

In the first number of the Review was opened the attack upon what was known as The Lake School of Poetry, carried on through the full period of Jeffrey's editorship. Reviewing Southey's 'Thalaba' he said, there would always be readers who would find entertainment in 'the representation of vulgar manners in vulgar language,' to whom elegance and dignity were of no importance, and who would accept a style 'due to a system teaching us to undervalue that vigilance and labour which sustained the loftiness of Milton, and gave energy and direction to the pointed and fine propriety of Pope.'

Twelve years later appeared Jeffrey's famous article on Wordsworth's 'Excursion,' commencing 'This will never do.' In the same vein Jeffrey dismissed 'the Lakers,' as he calls them, as 'a puling and self-admiring race.' This is pretty well for a gentleman who commenced his literary career by writing verse of a quality his friend and biographer, Lord Cockburn, described as 'less poetical than his prose.'

The prosperity of the Review naturally brought competitors into the field. The Tories, looking on dismayed at the hold the Whig stripling had gained upon the public of England as well as Scotland, resolved to bring out their own organ. It was briefly called 'The Quarterly,' and lives to this day in peaceful companionship with its earlier foe, the 'Edinburgh Review.' The first number appeared in February 1809.

In 1817 another redoubtable knight rode into the lists. This was 'Blackwood's Magazine,' the first, and by no means the least great of the monthlies. It is able to-day to boast that 'the fame and circulation of "Blackwood's Magazine" at the end of the century is higher than at any other period.' This incursion upon what he had regarded as his personal territory had the effect of waking up Jeffrey to maintain the lead. There were no signs of falling fortune about the Review. On the contrary, the appearance of rivals increased its sale. In 1814 it rose to over 12,000 copies per quarter; in 1817 it touched 13,500, the highest point ever reached, but, as Jeffrey feared, it was growing old. In January 1825 he wrote to a friend: 'Can you lay your hands on some clever young men who would write for us? The original supporters of the work are getting old and either too busy or too stupid, and here the young men are mostly Tories.'

An epoch-making answer was forthcoming. Seven months later the Review was enlivened by a contribution from Macaulay, a young man of twenty-five, whose name was unknown to the public. The subject was Milton, an essay to-day known as one of the treasures of English literature. Macaulay was at the time in Calcutta, whence he despatched his manuscript to Edinburgh. As he described it, it was 'of interminable length,' a characteristic which marked subsequent contributions. To Macvey Napier, Jeffrey's successor in the editorial chair, the essay on Bacon was submitted. It ran to 120 pages, out of 282 that made up the number. Napier appealed to Jeffrey for advice as to what he should do. In ordinary case an editor would have fearlessly cut it down.

'What mortal,' Jeffrey wrote in reply, 'could ever dream of cutting out the least particle of this precious work to make it fit better with your Review? It would be worse than paring down the Pitt diamond to fit the old setting of a dowager's ring. It is altogether magnificent—*et prope divinum.* Since Bacon himself I do not know that there has been anything so fine. I have read it not only with delight, but with emotion—with throbbings of the heart and tears in the eye.'

Napier timidly clipped it to the extent of sixteen pages.

Lacking the authority of the first editor, Napier had a bad time with some of his contributors. Between Brougham and Macaulay serious quarrels arose. The former, jealous of the length afforded to the new recruit's contributions, complained that his own assistance had come to be reckoned 'as a very secondary object,' and darkly threatened resignation. Macaulay retorted that he 'lost patience with a man who half knows everything, and is best at domineering the editor and puffing his own contributions.'

It was in the April number of 1839 that Macaulay's review of Gladstone's book on Church and State appeared. A sentence describing the personality of the author is frequently quoted. The text of the passage is worth reprinting; the closing sentences are not familiar, and in view of Gladstone's successes and failures are equally interesting.

'The author of this volume is a young man of unblemished character and of distinguished Parliamentary talents, the rising hope of those stern and unbending Tories who follow reluctantly and mutinously a leader whose experience and eloquence are indispensable to them, but whose cautious temper and moderate opinions they abhor. It would not be at all strange if Mr. Gladstone were one of the most unpopular men in England. But we believe that we do him no more than justice when we say that his abilities and his demeanour have obtained for him the respect and goodwill of all parties.'

'Mr. Gladstone,' the article goes on, 'appears to be in many respects exceedingly well qualified for philosophical investigation. His mind is of large grasp; nor is he deficient in dialectical skill. But he does not give his intellect fair play. There is no want of light, but a great want of what Bacon would have called dry light. Whatever Mr. Gladstone sees is refracted and distorted by a false medium of passion and prejudices. His style bears a remarkable analogy to his mode of thinking, and, indeed, exercises great influence on his mode of thinking. His rhetoric, though often good of its kind, darkens and perplexes the logic it should illustrate.'

Macaulay also had differences with Sydney Smith. Both were brilliant talkers, neither disposed to be brief. Macaulay had the drawback of exceedingly rapid utterance, which sometimes made it difficult to follow the stream of his conversation. 'He never lets me get in a word,' Sydney Smith said, with woeful countenance. Once when this was more than usually the case he rose to leave the room: 'When I am gone,' he said to Macaulay, 'you will be sorry you have not heard me speak a word.' Lord Cockburn in his Journal—a mine of information about the 'Edinburgh Review,' its editors and contributors—says that Sydney Smith, happening to meet him in the street, mentioned that he had just been to call upon Macaulay, whom he found sick in bed. 'He was,' Smith added, 'more agreeable than I remember ever having found him. There were some glorious flashes of silence.'

Another of Napier's contributors not easy to deal with was Carlyle. In looking through his contributions, the editor found it necessary to use the blue pencil. Carlyle was exceeding wroth. 'Editorial hacking and hewing,' he wrote, 'I will not stand. Surely you can trust me, for I strongly hold that one can and should ever *speak quietly*. Loud hysteric vehemence, foaming, hissing least of all becomes him that is convinced and not only *supposes*, but *knows.'* The italics are Carlyle's. The passage is delicious, coming from the Apostle of Silence in many volumes.

It was in 1829 that Jeffrey resigned the editorship of the Review, and Macvey Napier, Professor of Conveyancing in Edinburgh University, was called to the post. Successors at intervals were Sir George Cornewall Lewis, and Henry Reeve, perhaps even better known as the editor of the Greville Memoirs, a publication that deeply wounded the sensibilities of Queen Victoria. Its present editor made his mark in the House of Commons before he retired to devote himself to the direction of a great periodical.

TRAFFIC OF YOUTH.

To A. C. M. C.

Oft in the twilight, ere the lamps are lit,
My thoughts like errant ghosts about me flit,
Haphazard, vague ; yet presently take shape,
And waft me on soft pinions to a Cape
Jutting across the ocean of the Past,—
To Memory's headland, where the tides flow fast
Bearing a fleet of bygone hopes and prayers.
And some were laden in a mist of tears,
Yet came to port ; others put bravely out
With love and laughter, but were tossed about
By storms, and foundered.
Look, yon galleon gay,
Bright-painted, pennons fresh as yesterday,
Carries a cargo richer than fine gold,—
Traffic of Youth lies fragrant in her hold.

Now at my feet she harbours, and a hatch
Is raised amidships ; straight a lusty batch
Of laughing dreams bestrew the encumbered poop
With wares for me to choose among. I stoop
Towards inky desks, oak panelling, a stove,
A master's dais ; old chestnut beams above
The wainscot ; mullioned windows, cobwebbed, dim ;—
For all the years, my faithful dreams can limn
The leastest inch of that remembered scene,
The Fifth-form Classroom ; with a brow serene
Our master enters,—mark him well, for he
Is trained and dowered as such an one should be,—
Firm, courteous, watchful, friendly, yet aloof.
'What is it you ask, lad ?' 'Please, Sir, where's the proof
That Homer wrote the Odyssey ? Of course
Books Ten to Twelve come from another source,—
That must be granted ; and Book Twenty-one
Is unhomeric, and clearly stands alone.'
Our master pounced upon the accustomed bait ;
With books forgotten we would gladly wait
Upon his wisdom, for we loved to bask
(Also, the sluggards would escape their task)

In that nice scholarship, and ripened sense,
And kindliness. 'Whither,' he said, 'or whence
A Poet's mood may lead him, none can say.
Only be sure of this—no common clay
Composed the mighty Epic.' For a while
He taught us where to mark the Poet's style,
Then touched upon the laws that e'er control
Epochs of Songs and Singers. 'Search the roll
Of all the greatest, you will surely find
No sweeter music, no serener mind.
Such clear perfection has no kith nor kin,
'Tis only smaller souls may find a twin.'
Then he would read us with sonorous tone
The abundant lines. Odysseus spake alone
Among the ghosts; or blinded Polypheme
Raved about No Man; or with spell supreme
The wanton Circe brewed a dreadful wine,
Turning poor sailormen to bristly swine.
Lovely Calypso, kind Alcinoüs,
Lissome Nausicaa,—they spake to us
In magic words: faithful Penelope,
Argus the dog, Telemachus, for me
They oped a window whence a lad could see
Into the Holy Place of Poetry.

And in the dusk I hear a whisper low,
'A many masters teach a lad to know
The gods bowed down to by the worldly-wise,—
Success, and Power, with all that money buys;
But few they are who teach the sons of men
The unequalled wisdom that he taught you then.
Though to the grave your body shall at length
Relinquish all its comeliness and strength;
Though reeling brain, and fruitless, palsied hand
Soon from their stale alliance must disband,—
'Tis naught, if haply from his wayward youth
A man has striven for Beauty, toiled for Truth.
Then shall a firm road guide his wavering feet,
Leading him onwards to the Mercy-seat.'

HUGH MONEY-COUTTS.

SOME ADDITIONS TO AUBREY.

BY THE DEAN OF WINCHESTER.

II.

THREE BIOGRAPHIES.

AUBREY's notes and letters were, if he had time, generally worked up into short biographies. The three sketches of Lives which follow are just such as are found among the Aubrey MSS. in the Bodleian, and seem (or are supposed) to be intended for use by Anthony Wood. They describe persons whom Aubrey is likely to have known, the first by hearsay at Oxford, the others in 'the great world.' Similar accounts might be gleaned from other writers, but a good deal seems to be quite new.

Sir William Paddy (1554–1634).

This gentleman, a great *medico* of his time, was the ancient friend of Archbishop Laud. When he was an old man, yet still went to hear sermons, he so heard Mr. Laud preach upon the Catholique claims of the English Church before the Universitie of Oxford, whose Vice Chancellor, a bitter pragmaticall man, was ready to convent him (as they called it). Then went the good Sir William straight to the Earl of Dorset who was the Chancellor, and told him what a very excellent learned man and of a very honest and good conversation was Mr. Lawde, and how he himself was present at the sermon and heard nothing that might give any just cause of offence. And so the storm blew off. He dwelt in a chamber at S. John Baptist College, on the first floor looking towards the great gate. When the Archbishop made his new building he wrote that there must be a flying stare to Sir William Paddy's lodgings. It was like a little house within the college. Often the medicall fellows (whom they have by their statutes) dwelt there. He was a great friend to catts, and one would often be seen upon his knees. So was the martyr. He was a great lover of catts. He was presented with some Cyprus-catts, our Tabby-catts, which were sold at first for 5 *li*. a piece: this was about 1637 or 1638—so he could not show them to Dr. Paddy. I doe well remember that the common English catt was white with some blewish piednesse: *sc*. a gallipot-blew. The race or breed of them are now almost lost.[1]

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[1] This passage, from 'He was a great lover' to 'almost lost,' is found, in almost the same words, apart from the rest, among Aubrey's *Monumenta Britannica* in the Bodleian. I do not think it has been printed. It is MS. Aubrey 15.

Now it was strange that tho' he was so great a lover of catts so alsoe he was of musique, for the two things do not lie well together, indeed they make what we call a catterwauling. But Sir W. Paddye did not thinke so and he left a large summe to his colledge for the enriching of its quire with singinge men which the old founder's money had never been enough for, or the fellowes had stolen it for their own purposes. Nowe it is set so that they cannot steale it unless they be very profligate and licentious. I have seen a letter of the Abp's to the Lord Wentworth[1] where he sayes 'Sir William Paddy our old St. John's man is dead and hath left the college money to purchase land to set up the choir and maintain it.' Mr. Baylie told me they had bought an estate at Wood Bevington in Warwickshire very beautiful and profitable. In the Warrs and Commonwealth—so call'd, but it was the common ill—this was taken away, but now is restored to its purpose, nor will ever be taken off again unless the times doe become again ungodlie and perverse, which the Lord forbid. And the Archbishop did send down a black box by the carrier wherein was his decree for an anniversary in honour of Sir W. Paddy and his memory as he himself hath appointed it and further that the organist singing men and boyes shall for that daye dine in the college hall and have 20*s.* for gaudies, which custom hath these manye years been pretermitted. The Archbishop ordered that the service should be sung twice every day at the choir-hours, and so, besides the Service of God which will be thus held up, the singing men themselves will much better their skill by daily practice if they ever intend to do themselves further good. When Dr. Laud was President the eminent Mr. Orlando Gibbons wrote an anthem to be performed in the chapel on S. John Baptist's Feast.

Sir William was one of the first learned men who made a physician's practice his study. He followed on Mr. John Case, one of the first Fellowes of his college, before whom the barbers were also the surgeons. Sir William was King James's physician. When Mr. John Case was alive, who was a great student of politics too and of anatomie, there was a picture painted of him looking down upon a skeleton. And no man knoweth what the skeleton may be. It hath a long tail that sticketh up between the ribs. It is some *homunculus* or mannikin. When Sir William showed it to a little gentleman who was a bishop's son, he being very young and pertinacious looketh at it a long while and then asked if the man who watched it were a physician. When he was told he was he looked again upon the skeleton and said 'Will it get better ?'

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[1] This is evidently the letter of Laud to Strafford, printed in Laud's *Works*, vol. vi, p. 415.

Sir William left a great library of medicall books. He was a member of King James's first Parliament wherein he sat for the towne of Thetford in Norfolk. Also he wrote a poem on the death of Queen Bess, which began with this line:

Terminus huc rerum meus huc me terminus urget,

whereat the scholars said that he made better play with his lancet than with his pen. He said in it that he hoped the new King, a very Solomon, would have no need of a physician.

Sic tamen ut medicâ sis sine salvus ope.

But the King made him his own physician and knighted him. The King was very friendlye with him. He conversed much with him. They pondered whether the morals of nurses are imbibed by infants with the milk, to which that other learned leech Sir Theodore Mayerne gave great thought. Sir William writ *negative*, whereat the King was pleased. Also he was a great friend to the King over the matter of tobacco, whereof the King was a great foe. At Oxforde in the year 1605 Sir William—for so he then was—argued before his majestie that 'smoking of tobacco is unfavourable to health,' whereat the King was mightily pleased. Dr. Raphael Thorius hath a poem to him 'De Paeto seu Tabaco,' wherein he apostrophizes thus:

Tu Paddaeo fave, nec enim praestantior alter
Morbifugae varias vires agnoscere plantae.

King James would never suffer men to take tobacco near him: at this Mr. Izaak Walton, who was a great smoaker, was much displeased. He would compare it to hell and to the vanities of this world. There was a song about this, of the smoak that doth so hie ascend and shows man's life doth have an ende: think of this when you smoake tobacco, and the pipe that is so foule within like to man's soule so stained with sinne. All this greatly pleased the King. Now when one Kemble was sent to death by Queene Marye he walked from the prison to the fire with a martyr's fortitude smoaking a pipe of tobacco. When one told this to King James, he saith 'And so he made an hereticall end.' (*Quaere*, or was it Sir William who said this?)

When King James lay a-dying it was Paddye who ministered to him, and he had a great Prayer Book in which he writ an account of the King's last houres and of his prayers. And this is what he writ: I have seen it, with the prayers of Archbishop Abbot and

Bishop Williams, in the book with the King's arms on it. Date Martii 27, 1625.

'Beyng sent for to Thibaulde butt two daies before the death of my soveraigne Lord and master King James: I held it my Christian dutie to prepare hym, telling hym that there was nothing left for me to doe (in y^e^ afternoone before his death y^e^ next daie att noone) butt to pray for his soule. Whereupon y^e^ Archbishop and y^e^ Lord keeper, byshop of Lincolne, demaunded yf His Majestie would be pleased that they shold praye wi^th^ Hym whereunto he cheerfullie accorded. And after short praier these sentences were by y^e^ Bishop of Lincolne distinctlie pronounced unto hym, who with his eies (the messenger of his Hart) lyfted up unto Heaven, att the end of every sentence, gave to us all therby, a godly assurance of those graces and livelie faith, whereun^to^ He apprehended the merite of our Lord and onlie Saviour Christ Jesus, accordinglie as in his godlie life he had often publiquelie expressed. Will. Paddy.'[1]

So the end of King James came very piously, and Bishop Williams (who was afterwards a great enemy of Bishop Lawde, calling him *that little meddling hocus pocus*, though he had the bravery to denye it) preached a solemn discourse at his obsequies on *Britain's Salomon.* No doubt Dr. Paddye did advise the King in his health very wisely; but he would not be advised.

Now this Sir William was also a great friend to Sir Robert Cotton, that great devourer of manuscripts, and importuned Bishop Laud when he was *Menevensis* to procure for him the manuscript of Beda from the Library of their Colledge, which was to stretch the statute. Dr. Juxon, that good man who gave King Charles the *viaticum* at his execution, was the President and he received back the book in March 1623 which was suffered to be taken out of ye Library and carried out of the Colledge at the earnest request of Sir William Paddy, Knight, their worthy Benefactor, whose request the whole Colledge did judge to bee *ardua et necessaria causa exportandi librum predictum ad tempus* according to the Statute in that part provided: so a fellow of the College telleth me.[2]

This good man lived till 1634 (*quaere* the daye he died?). He was a great approver of the Bath waters, where he sent Richardson, Chief Justice, in the summer before he himself died, for fear of palsy. In the chapel where he gave a pneumatick organ of great cost there is a monument to him. He was one of the last to wear a ruffe. He had a close clipt long bearde. There is a picture of him in his scarlet and another in his black doctor's gown with his great golde watche on the table beside him. He was an incomparable person.

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[1] This MS. note of Sir W. Paddy's was printed verbatim in the *Transactions of the Scottish Ecclesiological Society*, 1904.

[2] This Mr. W. H. Stevenson, Librarian, reports to be recorded in the College Register, ii. p. 647. The MS. he identifies with MS. 17, a famous twelfth-century Thorney MS. of Bede.

George Morley (1597–1684).

This eminent person hath so many biographers that I need not say much of him, for all is well known both to Mr. Anthonie à Wood and to others who keep the impress of our times. He was a notable man at every time of his life, being a scholar of the Westminster school and a student of the *Aedes Christi* at Oxford. In his youth he knew Ben Johnson very well, who alsoe had been in the vpermost forme at Westminster, but nigh a quarter century before him. Ben served as a bricklayer before he became a poet. But Mr. Morley was often a helpe to him and knewe him in his old age when he was poore and sicke. Himself was a great lord's chaplain (Carnarvon it was) till he was 43, and after that Chaplain to the King and had a prebend at Christ Church. He would not be of the Assembly of Divines, but he served King Charles well in his Universitie, where the Puritanes took all his rents from him, and then at the Isle of Wight where he was concerned in the Treaty of Newport as it was called. And he was confessor to Arthur Lord Capell when he was killed by the rebels. After he was with the King in Holland and Chaplain to the beautifull Elizabeth Queen of Bohemia aunt to King Charles II. They were poore together, yet would he spend the little he had among the book shops in the Hague, as I have often been told, and so he began that gloriose library which afterwards he gave to his cathedral. He was a great friend to the learned Dutch. Firmly settled was he in the Church of England but at the Restoration of King Charles and the Church he was eager to admit the Presbyterian preachers to minister in the Church by waye of conditional ordination, to remove all scruple and doubtfulness from them that held the old way Apostolicall.

Dr. Morley would rise very early and go to bed very late. He was never in bed more than six hours, nor would he eate more than once, in the twenty four. He was a very strong man. He had a bright ruddy pumpled face, and a thin disordered beard: also his hair would be brush down like a fringe over his browe. In his cathedrall there is a noble monument of him with the inscription he wrote for it when he was more than eightie yeares of age. He was a great friende likewise to Mr. John Evelyn at whose request he vindicated himselfe against the Jesuite

Maimbourg in the matter of the Duchess of York's perversion, whose Confessor he was. He very wittily described the madde Queen Christina of Sweden between whom and the Queen of Bohemia there were some discourtesies.

He was Bishop of Winchester twentie two yeares and five monethes, and was of eighty-seven years when he dyed. His greatest benefactions (out of many great ones) were the college-house he built for the widows of priests at Winchester and the library of rare books, the collection of all his life, to the Chapter of that church. Over his tomb hang the mitre and the Bishop's staffe which the heralds carried at his funeralles.

It was he who preached the sermon at King Charles's coronation, being then Lord Bishop of Worcester. After that within a year or so he was Bishop of Winchester, where he spent all his money on the good of the See, repairing the great castle of Farnham and building a fine house by Wolvesey ruins in the city of Winchester. He never had a wife and he would not spend his money on himself, only by way of hospitality, for he was ever generous. Mr. I. Walton and his daughters had ever rooms for them in his house. When that good man died he left to my lord a mourning ring with the words 'A mite for a million.' But my lord was not a fisherman like his friend the Compleat Angler, yet it is said that it was from him there came these words in that famous booke.

'It is observed by the most learned physician that the casting off of Lent, and other fish days, which hath not only given the lie to so many learned, pious, and wise founders of colleges, for which we should be ashamed, hath doubtless been the chief cause of those many putrid, shaking, intermitting agues unto which this nation of ours is now more subject than those wiser countries that feed on herbs, salads and plenty of fish; of which it is observed in story that the greatest part of the world now do. And it may be fit to remember that Moses, Levit. xi. 9. Deut. xiv. 9, appointed fish to be the chief diet for the best commonwealth that ever yet was.' He was himself a great eater of fish, and at one of his abodes (? which) had a great stewpond. His friend Mr. Walton could not induce him to eat the chubb, but he was fond of carp. Also he would say when he watched, as he sometimes would, the Angler at worke in the stream that runs through the close, while the boyes could be heard at their practice, with the organs playing in the cathedral, *gaudebant carmine phocae*, as saith *Valerius Flaccus*, and would ask the children if they had ever seen the *Bishopp fishe,* which is told of by *Rondeletius* and vouched of by *Bellonius*, yet he never could find one who had save a little Welsh boye who saide they swam in the sea by Llanelly, which I do not think to be true.

Peter Mews (1619–1706).

This bishop was an honest old cavalier. He came of a Dorsetshire family that bore arms: Or 3 Pales gules. On a chief azure 3 cross crosslets Argent. I say this because a wit hath said his arms were 3 catts rampant regardant. He came after the good Bishop Morley, and he will live to an age still greater than he, if I be not much mistook, for he is an hardy man, of a tough spirit and hath been a warrior in his time. He weareth a black patch upon his cheeke to cover his old wound which he gained when he fought for the King in Scotland in 1653. Mr. Wood saith and very truly that he is much beloved for his hospitality, generosity, justice and frequent preachings. At Sedgmoor he directed the cannons against the Duke of Monmouth's rabble (it may be then that he received his wound ?); but he was not a favourer of Popery. It was he who restored the Fellows to Magdalen College when the King had turned them out and he instituted Dr. Hough in the President's place in spite of the King. If a sickness had not befallen him he would have been with our seven brave bishops in their trial and prison.

King Charles, because of the many wounds he had received in his father's service and his own, and because he was very skilful in all royal business, gave him many preferments, a list which it irks to write. The chief of all, the noble church of *Winton,* he did indeed richly deserve. Therein he showed his great attachment to his college in Oxford (wherein he had held the President's place) by the number of its sons whom he brought into his chapter. Himself also married Dr. Baylie's daughter who was great-niece to Archbishop Laud.

The worthy Mr. Waple, to whom his college gave the famous Church of the Sepulchre in Newgate, was one of his prebendaries. He was a good charitable man, and no enemy to any Christian, yet he would not suffer any to take the Sacrament sitting, as King William's men wished. Yet was he chief consecrater of Dr. Tillotson. I have heard him say, though he was so stout a Protestant, that he believed what Mr. Evelyn wrote to be very true, as thus: 'Having for my own particular a very great charity for all who sincerely adore the blessed Jesus, our common and dear Saviour, as being full of hope that God (however the present zeal of some and the scandals taken by others at the instant afflictions of the Church of England may transport them) will at last compassionate our infirmities, clarify our judgments, and make abatement of our ignorances, superstructures, passions, and errors of corrupt times and interests, of which the Roman persuasion can no way acquit herself, whatever the present prosperity and secular polity may portend.'

A witty thing was said of him in my hearing. When someone spoke of his great preferments another said 'he did not bear the sword in vain.'

It will be seen that the fragments on Mews are unfinished; and more evidently so than those on Paddy and Morley. They, like so many in Dr. Andrew Clark's admirable edition of the 'Brief Lives,' are very rough and incomplete notes. Aubrey, who was ten years younger than Bishop Mews, may well have expected to survive him. But the opportunity to learn more did not come, for while the Bishop lived on till 1706 (when it is said that a young scholar of Winchester College foretold the bishop's death, and his own), Aubrey died in 1697, aged seventy-one. Thus the date of Bishop Mews's death on the MS. is a later addition.

THE RED-AND-YELLOW DRESS.

Sophia and I had observed Phœbe together for the past three years. Sophia, of course, had always intermittently observed her niece; but it was not until Sophia married me that I ever met the child. She came to stay with us in our first home—the home on a sunny hillside where the nightingales sang amongst the apple-blossom and lilac weeks before less happy people realised Spring had come.

Phœbe was like Spring—the Spring of the rathe primrose, the first daffodil: not the Spring of lush grass and full florescence, of riotous kingcups, flashing kingfishers. She was timid: with the timidity of a flower rather than that of a timorous bird or animal. She did not come out into the open and then shrink back into shelter: she remained hidden. In a company of wood-anemones it would not be Phœbe's if the behaviour were strident; she had about as much assertiveness as a wild lily-of-the-valley. A field-mouse has more definite self-assurance. She invited domination—and her family had responded to the invitation. Her father had snubbed her, her mother had tyrannised over her; her two elder sisters had treated her exactly as we believe Cinderella's sisters to have treated Cinderella. Her father had been cross with her all her life for her being a girl when he had determined on a son—a displeasure which was not to be lived down. Her mother had not wanted a third child at all. Her sisters had wanted a pink Japanese mouse, and had been put off with this pink-faced baby instead. She had satisfied nobody, and it was all dreadfully unfortunate. No one ever pretended to be pleased to see her; they were not pleased—and they were completely honest. Phœbe was in the way. She was not a boy; she was not even a Japanese mouse. She was 'another girl'; she was 'poor Mrs. Canderson's disappointment.' And so they bullied her. They bullied her for sixteen years without stopping once. Then her mother discovered that she was anæmic and wrote to Sophia about her. Sophia, who had been sorry for Phœbe for sixteen years, clutched at the anæmia and invited her to come on a visit of indefinite duration. Hitherto, when Sophia had invited Phœbe, one of her sisters, without any explanation, had always turned up instead. But now that Phœbe was ill she no longer came vicariously.

Her visit lasted for three years. At the end of it she married my cousin, Fielding Diss.

On the evening of the wedding-day, Sophia, flushed with exhaustion and triumph, came out into the garden to talk. The evening was still—sweet-scented. It was early October, a sort of June-October, with the beauty that is poignant in its sense of irremediable eclipse. There were roses, roses even lovelier than in June; but one's delight in them was a hurried delight—one appreciated breathlessly; change was so near. The light in the sky above the oak copse was radiant as in summer, but we had it on a declining lease. Everything was running down, out, away—getting shorter, scarcer, feebler. Often I wonder how we outlive autumn—how any life is kept alive.

I looked at Sophia. She was very much alive.

'I feel that Phœbe has got her chance at last,' said she with satisfaction. I smiled at her; one is obliged to smile at Sophia. But I felt less satisfaction. Fielding Diss is my cousin; and I had seen marriages before from which all were to get their chance. Well, perhaps they got it. But they got little else.

'She has been re-born to-day as Mrs. Fielding Diss,' Sophia went on. 'As Miss Phœbe Canderson she had no chance, no personality, no existence. The ceremony to-day was much more a christening than a wedding: it endowed her with a name, in comparison with which a husband is incidental. She is somebody now.'

'You say that her wedding should more correctly be regarded as a christening?'

'Certainly. Until now she has been wholly negative, "not wanted" including every other negation. Her own family labelled her "Not wanted on the voyage," and she was lowered into the hold from the day of her birth.'

'And Fielding was the steam-crane that hauled her out?'

'No, we hauled her out: you and I. Fielding was the taxi that picked her up on the quay and drove away with her.'

'You really think that she will become something vivid?'

'I think she may become simply anything. She may wear red-and-yellow dresses. She may order Fielding about. She may waste his money and tell him so to his face. She may contradict her father. She may correct your literary style.'

'And all because Fielding married her? But you, Sophia—you do none of those things. And yet I did you the inestimable advantage of marrying you.'

'On the contrary, dearest, I did you the inestimable advantage of marrying *you*. After which what red-and-yellow dress was necessary?'

'And when you waste my money I never find it out?'

'When I waste your money I pretend it's only my clever way of saving it.'

And so we stopped talking about Phœbe. We leaned over the garden gate—stayed there until we remembered only ourselves. Phœbe faded, in her red-and-yellow dress; the roses, so soon to fade in reality, faded already from our realisation; the sky above the western copse faded from a dream into night. But we remained—remained until Sophia gave a little cry and remembered that there were mushrooms for supper.

'Only mushrooms?' I queried.

'Mushrooms and wedding-cake.'

So we went indoors.

But there were really other things besides.

We saw nothing of Phœbe for a year. She wrote from time to time to Sophia, but her letters were all about us—they contained nothing about herself.

'They are the letters of an unhappy woman,' said Sophia judicially.

'Why?' said I, although I thought I knew. But I like Sophia to tell me things. I like it because she likes it so much.

'When you are happy, you write about what you are doing. It is all so jolly, you have to. When you are unhappy, you remember to inquire after your correspondent's interests. Phœbe is even solicitous about our hens and potatoes. Now nobody with much *joie de vivre* about her gives a thought to the hens of her aunt or the potatoes of her uncle.'

I picked up Phœbe's last letter, which lay on Sophia's writing-table. It was very neat, and it fitted in the most estimable manner into the sheet of note-paper selected for it. It had nothing overflowing about it.

I read it.

I laid it down.

'No sign whatever of the red-and-yellow dress,' I said. 'Phœbe is not asserting herself.'

'And I am afraid Fielding is not asserting her.'

I was silent. As I have already remarked, Fielding Diss is my cousin.

'I think we'd better go to London and see Phœbe.' And Sophia stood up and straightened herself. She is always straight; when she straightens herself . . . well, this time it meant London.

We went, and we saw Phoebe. She was one of the many charming things in Fielding's house. But she had less personality than the parlourmaid; obviously she counted for less. It was an effort, hostess as she was, to remember her presence in the room. We did not see Fielding; for we lunched with Phœbe, and it was her husband's practice to lunch at his club.

'And how is your garden?' asked Phœbe, when Sophia had finished telling all about my new book and I had finished telling all about Sophia's new curtains.

'Oh, the garden . . .' and off went Sophia rather feverishly.

The garden done with, Phœbe asked about our neighbours. The neighbours disposed of, she passed on to the poultry. It was all exactly like her letters: inanimate, unselfish, detached.

We came away feeling miserable.

'Was she bullied too long?' queried Sophia wistfully. 'I mean at home. I don't mean that she is bullied now.'

'No,' I agreed. 'I don't think she is bullied now. Neglected, possibly; but then, poor child, she is so negligible.'

'It was a very difficult visit,' sighed Sophia. 'I felt that it was tactless to carry happiness such as mine into Phœbe's house. I was making a vulgar display; I was wearing my diamonds in the presence of a woman who possessed only a poor pearl or two. I felt I sat and glared—I mean that I made a glare for Phœbe's weak eyes. I wanted to tone myself down: to make out that I merely made the best of things—that you were no better than you should be, and that my brave array was only my brave face, while my smile was hollow.'

Upon which, of course, I kissed Sophia's dimple, that being the only hollow thing about her smile.

'Your tact has my permission to carry you whither it will. Trample on my character; tell Phœbe anything. And I have never aimed at being better than I should be; being as good as I should be is bother enough. Only make Phœbe happier and more important.'

'I can't,' said Sophia.

'But you are so good at happiness. Look at me. Look at the hens. I am so happy, and they are so important.'

'Phœbe is neither a hen nor a husband. And nothing happened to stiffen her during her years with us. Remember that.'

In the end we agreed that we could only give Phœbe time. I don't know how we fancied it was ours to give.

. . . . . .

A year was time enough.

In a year Phœbe's parlourmaid was entirely eclipsed; Phœbe's husband was no longer permitted to lunch at his club; and Sophia and I were summoned to London to make obeisance before Phœbe's son.

We went in the spirit of the Magi. We found a complacent babe, a mother struggling between super-pride and over-anxiety, a great ox of a nurse, a little donkey of a nursemaid, and, somewhere in the background, daring neither to assert nor to absent himself, hanging about, subservient, shamefaced, with a somewhat set smile—Fielding.

It was the triumph of the mother.

Man—adult man—had been set in his proper place. In other words, Fielding's rooms had been taken from him and converted into nurseries. Phœbe attended to him only when her son could not possibly want his mother. Phœbe swept about; she no longer (so to speak) shut the door after her. Her voice was pitched on a fuller, and at the same time higher, note; command rang in it. Her husband obeyed her; had she not considered herself he would have considered her.

The cook left.

. . . . . .

Returning from London, Sophia and I reached our own home aghast. In Sophia's hand was a small parcel. It was a rejected offering. It contained a small white jacket. The baby had signified its disapproval of Sophia's small white jacket. So we had brought it back with us. 'It will do for some village child,' Phœbe had said. We had meekly acquiesced.

'She is spoilt,' said Sophia, sinking into the softest and most comforting of our arm-chairs.

'Or redeemed?' said I, remaining standing. I had meant to sink into the softest and most comforting of our arm-chairs myself. So the line I took was slightly argumentative.

'*Redeemed?* She is perfectly horrid.'

'Well, she is no longer overlooked or ignored.'

'No; you cannot overlook vulgarity nor ignore bad manners.'

'She has merely overdone her colour scheme.'

'Her colour scheme?'

'Her red-and-yellow dress.'

Sophia laughed.

'She is utterly different,' she said. 'One would think she had never been here—never seen the place, never loved it (she used to say she loved it), never cared for us. When I told her the magnolia was dead in spite of my hot water bottle and all that straw, she replied that the baby's hair was certainly going to be curly.'

'And since it has no hair at all at present, you could not contradict her. I saw your predicament. And when I observed to her that I was thinking of raising the south wall four feet, she looked dreamy and said: "Feet, Uncle Frank? Yes, ar'n't they the sweetest things?"—and kissed the creature's toes.'

'Well, she has heard you speak of raising the south wall before, you know, darling. Not so often as I have, perhaps, but still, many times before.'

'Not at all,' I replied. 'And I think, Sophia, that you might let me sit down in my own chair.'

But Sophia sat still.

'I was just going to ask you to make up the fire,' she said.

I gave in. After all, it was the quickest way into my chair.

I made up the fire and drew up a small stool—a stool whose hardness must soften Sophia's heart.

It did instantly.

She got up.

'We have ceased to exist, Frank, you and I; or rather, we exist in one character only. We live in that we have a great-nephew—*the* great-nephew, I ought to say, but it doesn't sound grammatical.'

I looked at Sophia, who stood in all her delicious existence before me. There were no signs of her having been felled to the earth even by Phœbe's all-powerful infant.

'And *she* lives in her father's eyes for the first time; she lives as the mother of his grandson and heir.' Sophia could not leave it alone.

'Yes,' said I, 'that really is queer. He is pleased with her at last; she had produced what she herself should, in his opinion, have been.'

'Altogether she is most frightfully important.'

'Bumptious. And if bumptious, happy. So there we are; it's what we wanted for her. We've got it. But she is spoilt.'

'*I* said that last time.'

'Well, of course it's true. Repletion is a fulsome sort of thing. She has the unseemliness of surfeit, of excess. A daughter might have been comparatively harmless. Or an ailing boy.'

'Oh, don't. Perhaps he will never live to grow up.'

'Nonsense, Sophia. His hair will curl through a radiant adolescence to a ripe maturity, when, choosing death rather than dishonour . . .'

'Death ?' interjected Sophia.

'Do not interrupt me . . . death rather than dishonour, it will leave him with the polished surface of an aldermanic pate.'

'You generally say that grey hairs are honourable.'

'Ah, that is when I've just seen my parting in a strong light.'

Sophia sighed.

'Anyhow, we are not wanted any more.'

'No. And it is so beastly nice to be wanted.'

'I want you,' said Sophia.

And I do not think she doubted that I wanted her.

But no one wanted the small white jacket, which remained in its parcel on the top shelf of Sophia's wardrobe.

. . . . . .

Soon afterwards Sophia and I left England to spend a winter in Georgia. Our departure was not wholly due to Phœbe's rejection of us. We did not forget Phœbe; neither did we think of her very often. I thought most of all of Sophia's lungs; and Sophia thought most of how good and brave it was of me to accompany her lungs to Georgia when I must be wanting to be in England. Just as if England had any charms for me when Sophia's lungs were in Georgia!

Phœbe wrote occasionally to say that James Fielding Norton Dieudonné had now got . . . I forget how many teeth, but the number, it was implied, was simply extraordinary; or that he had been staying in the country or on the East Coast; or that he weighed a preposterous reckoning of lb. and oz. But he never asked how many teeth I still had left, or whether Sophia continued to lose in weight; and his mother did not seem to wish to make these inquiries for her own satisfaction—if James Fielding Norton Dieudonné did not care to know, neither did she. Sophia replied appropriately.

Then, after we had spent a second Georgian winter and were preparing to return to England, came a letter from Fielding. He wrote to say that James Fielding Norton Dieudonné was dead—returned to God who gave him. During his mother's absence at her father's funeral he had died of meningitis. And might he (Fielding) bring Phœbe to Sophia as soon as we reached home?

He did so.

It was Spring again, timid, etherial, warm—Spring, to which we used to liken Phœbe, who now, white and spectral,

> more dreary cold
> Than a forsaken bird's-nest filled with snow
> 'Mid its own bush of leafless eglantine—

resembled rather Grief, but Grief bereaved even out of the power of grieving.

Memory had passed from her. Her marriage and motherhood might never have been. She spoke neither of her husband, of her home, nor of the child; she wrote no letters, and the letters she received she passed over to Sophia unopened. Fielding came several times to see her; she received him as a faintly familiar guest. He did not attempt to stay longer than a few hours; after his departure on the first occasion she asked how we came to know him. I replied that he was a cousin of mine.

'Then is he a sort of cousin of mine too?' queried she vaguely.

'Yes,' Sophia said, 'and we are so fond of him. But don't you remember him?'

'I think I do a little,' said Phœbe. 'I think he has been here before.'

'He has. But hav'n't you seen him anywhere else?'

'I believe I remember him at a funeral. I once saw him crying at a funeral. It must have been at Daddy's funeral. Wasn't it?'

What could Sophia do but acquiesce?

. . . . . .

Phœbe still lives with us. Sophia has twice suggested her returning to Fielding, but Phœbe has not understood.

'Certainly I will go with you to stay with your cousin if he asks me as well as you, but I could not go alone. What are you thinking of, Sophia? I could not go and stay with your cousin *alone*.'

We cannot venture on taking her into that house. Neither does Fielding wish it. 'I lost them both at the same time,' he says, 'but her ghost returned to you, not to me. Only go on loving it. And do not force it back into a grave. I do as I can.'

It is true; he does as he can.

So does Phœbe.

So do Sophia and I.

And so did James Fielding Norton Dieudonné.

F. K. BUTTERWORTH.

CLERICAL AND OTHER TESTIMONIALS.

THAT Red Tapeism exists outside Government offices is not generally recognised; yet it is manifest in the vogue of the testimonial, especially one from a clergyman. It is surprising that in a practical age like ours this sort of witness to character and capacity was not scrapped long ago; but its cult apparently grows stronger every day. The clergyman of a large parish must spend much of his time in recommending all sorts of people for all sorts of places; and sometimes with his pen in his hand, before commencing, he has to stop to think where and when he saw the applicant before, or if this was the first time. The Establishment is a national asset. Parishioners have a habit, delightful in its assurance, of knocking at his door—'Testimonial, please!' and in many cases they know no other use of the vicar. This by-product of a National Church counts for advantage. The established clergy from their position fulfil a useful purpose in subscribing to admirable qualities and qualifications in other people; and if, on the whole, they take a roseate view as exponents of a charity that hopeth all things, this arises from two praiseworthy motives: it is natural and perfectly nice in them to wish to gratify a parishioner, and in their daily contact with so much misery and sorrow they see enough of the burden of the world to make them eager to help wherever they possibly can. No one would begrudge a few kindly words on half a sheet of note-paper which may give a man a lift in life and possibly affect all his future. Besides, the clergy are famed for their unworldly principles, for their unbusiness-like qualities, and for their courtesy; and if some of them cannot preach, they can all write testimonials, and the layman without attending church is the first to recognise it.

But, from a different standpoint, the testimonial is not satisfactory, to say the least. Why, then, does it flourish? Because custom is strong; because the conventional rules us; and because the better alternative of private and confidential references would entail too much trouble in other quarters. The present writer has had to do with reading or writing testimonials all the days of his life, and feels he speaks with some expert knowledge.

Of course, three persons are involved in the transaction—the applicant, the giver, and the receiver, or third party. But if the third party does not know the giver, he lacks essential *data* from which to form a judgment on what he reads. This is nearly always the case, and, in consequence, commendatory terminology is nearly always misleading. We differ in temperament; we differ in our modes of expression on paper; and both of these are factors in the production of a recommendation. The style of the stockbroker and that of the poet may differ considerably when they sit down to write. One man is profuse with words, another concise; one is off-hand and imaginative, another pragmatical. A single word from one person may be worth more than twenty from another. But the third party cannot tell this, if he is a perfect stranger. Once upon a time the present writer, anxious for preferment, was compelled to ask his churchwarden, a retired butler, for a recommendation. The unclerical reader must bear in mind that there is in the Church of England great competition for incumbencies with a living wage. This is a verbatim copy of the churchwarden's recommendation:

'265A Lower Street,
C——.

'GENTLEMEN,

'The Vicar has performed his duties to my satisfaction.

'Yours truly,
'J. SMITH.'

As an unadorned statement it was admirable, but its severe simplicity gave it an appearance of damning with faint praise. There was, however, more in it than met the eye. Mr. Smith was a man of few words and high ideals, which it did not occur to him to mention. Those who knew him could judge accordingly; but the patrons did not know him; they no more knew him and his ideals than they did the man in the moon, and the writer had the mortification of seeing a thoroughly good living go to his junior, whose churchwarden was not only of superior social status, but was also more ready with his pen.

Practice in the art of composing testimonials begets too often a professional touch. Style predominates over accuracy. Everyone knows the temptation of adding an extra word or two for the sake of the cadence. And that extra word or two may be a deciding factor. The custom, too, of placing the manuscript straight into the applicant's hands is another point in his favour. It is a system by which the unvarnished truth runs considerable risks. Most of us have a higher estimate of ourselves than others have of us, and it does not conduce to candour or soberness of statement about a person, when we know that what we have written will be read by him, as soon as he gets out of the door. It is a delicate situation for anybody, and especially so when it occurs between a clergyman and one of his parishioners.

The correspondent of an elementary school, if he is wise, will not seriously consider testimonials about teachers. The 'good disciplinarian' on her arrival will not, as a rule, show any superiority in that direction over one who has not been credited with the qualification. There is so much of a muchness about these recommendations that, provided the names and addresses were erased, the head teacher himself would find it a difficult task to re-distribute them to their proper owners. Somewhat analogously, there is an annual similarity in the reports of our Diocesan Inspector of Religious Knowledge. For the past twenty years they have been true to type: 'The writing was neat and tidy; the spelling fair on the whole; the children showed an eagerness in answering; the school is making good progress.' By rights we should by now be at the top of the diocese.

The testimonial is kept alive by its *suppressio veri.* Yet its negative value, its absence of mention of anything detrimental, is also untrustworthy. A positively truthful description of a person never happens. It is altogether out of the question. No one ever gave or received a testimonial like this: 'Mr. Brown is a good gardener, honest and fairly steady; but he is extremely self-willed and has a horrible temper.' At times it is the greater charity to hide an item of truth. The present writer did it once before the war, in days perhaps not of stricter morality but of stricter public opinion about it. With the easy morals of the village, where nature reigns, the young girl had fallen—the only occasion—and her regrets were genuine; her character rehabilitated, she would never do it again. The only thing to be done was to keep a certain fact out of her record for her to have a new start in a new place, else punishment would have followed her for all her days because she stumbled once. Not to mention the fact was unfair to her future mistress; to mention it, disastrous to the girl, who had most at stake and was the under-dog. The compromise of mentioning the fact and covering it with extenuations would have saved one's conscience, but it would not have saved the girl.

No testimonial is talismanic against the influx of evil. What at its best is only a record of the past cannot be a guarantee for the future. Yet some people will persist in regarding it as a sort of charm or as a promissory note. The present writer remembers one day a motor-car driven furiously up to his door, and the bell rung violently twice in succession. Without preamble the Jehu, a total stranger, shouted truculently: 'I say, Kate Duster's stolen my wife's jewellery!' The writer, taken aback and forgetting for the moment who Kate Duster was, asked what that had got to do with him. 'Everything,' said Jehu, 'she's our parlourmaid; you vouched for her honesty; we took her on your recommendation.'

Myself: 'Let me see. I remember now. You wrote to me, Was she honest? I replied, Yes. Well, her parents and brothers and sisters are perfectly honest, and I never heard she wasn't until this moment. What else could I have replied? She's been with you about a year. Sixteen months, was it?'

Sometimes courage is needed in getting a testimonial to one's liking. The very particular man often succeeds in his demand, and he will not be put off with anything evasive. This was years ago, but not long enough ago to be out of date. In a great public department, not far from Whitehall, on a reduction of the staff, Jones, of little experience and much of a duffer, had to go. Jones, who had a lisp, was not satisfied with his farewell testimonial. A lesser man would have bemoaned his fate in secret; but Jones, with the disappointing testimonial in his hand, forced his way into the chief's office, and blurted out, 'Misther ——, thith won't do for me!' Instead of kicking him out of the room, as everybody had expected, the great man turned round mildly and said 'Very well, I'll write you another.' This was done, and then Jones met with success at the War Office, where he rose to a high position; and he has always traced his good fortune to the testimonial he won for himself on the occasion of his dismissal for incompetence. He had a namesake who was transferred from a private department to one more in contact with the outside public, for which position suavity of demeanour and equability of temper were necessary qualifications. This namesake was the worst man in the world for the job, being moody and quarrelsome; but he was given a trial, and failed lamentably. Finally, he was dismissed the Civil Service, and at once obtained a mercantile post at Manchester. A former comrade of his, speaking about it to the head of his department, said it was strange that anyone could be found to offer employment so soon to a confirmed drunkard, up to his ears in debt, and with a temper no man could put up with. The reply was, 'The reason is, it depended on my judicious wording.' Judicious wording is a pregnant phrase, and is too often the main difficulty confronting the perplexed writer of these conventional favours.

Medical certificates may perhaps be regarded as testimonials about our physical bodies as distinguished from our mental and moral characteristics which form the sphere of the testimonial proper. The writer's friend, now an eminent public servant, was in his younger years sometimes desirous of a sudden extension of leave. One year, on a visit to Glasgow, he did not want, for intimate personal reasons, to return to work for some weeks; and as he was staying at a doctor's house, it was aptly managed. But perhaps this is not quite a fair example, as the doctor was his cousin. Certainly the writer's own experience of the medical profession is that its members, on the whole, are not easily got over. He knows that in his parish the local doctor during the period of control was almost daily besieged with applications for certificates for extra rations, sometimes of whisky and sometimes of other things, but without effect, although the applicants were his best-paying patients.

Close corporations with livings in their gift think a lot of testimonials. That was why a clerical friend of the writer was compelled to write his own eulogy. Paradoxical as it may seem, he could not help himself. He said he did not particularly like the job, but what else could he do? A better living was half promised him, on condition his churchwardens supported his application. The difficulty was that neither of them belonged to that class of life from which it is usual to get characters about clergymen. Both were rather illiterate. If the reader will imagine a colonel requesting two corporals for an estimate of his capacities to forward to the War Office, he will grasp the situation. The churchwardens said they would do their best. After many days they said they had tried, but failed, and thought it would be a better plan for the vicar himself to write out what he wished them to say in his behalf, and they would sign it with pleasure. Speaking of it subsequently, the vicar asked the present writer what he thought of it.—‘Not quite straightforward ?’ ‘I confess,’ said the vicar, ‘I don’t see it in that light. Someone had to do it, and the churchwardens, as you can imagine, would have made a mess of it. Besides, it was their proposition, which was what the patrons asked for. Anyhow, I said nothing untrue about myself, and the churchwardens by signing it made it their own.’ What did he say about himself ? ‘Oh ! the usual things,’ he replied ; ‘attractive preacher, liberal views, diligent visitor, organising powers, influence over young men. In fact, I copied it from a clerical advertisement in a religious newspaper.’ Did he get the new living ? ‘Why,’ said he, ‘I am in it now.’

‘And, d’you know,’ he added after a pause, ‘the churchwardens were so delighted with my successor, that I’ve sometimes thought they too were anxious for a change.’

H. H. S.

FOR ECONOMY'S SAKE AND HUMANITY'S.

SOME eighteen years ago, the Mayor of Eastbourne was sorely perplexed, sorely troubled, too. As Mayor, it was his duty to see that fair treatment was meted out to the poor, was meted out also to the ratepayers; that, while the poor were well cared for, not a penny of the ratepayers' money was wasted. And, let him try as he would, he could not shut his eyes to the fact that, in the workhouse—and it was there that a large amount of the money was spent—the treatment meted out was grossly unfair, and that there was great waste as well as great misery.

In the workhouse all sorts and conditions were shut up together; wastrels, ex-vagrants, ex-criminals, and decent old men and women; they who had never done a stroke of honest work, and they who had toiled and moiled early and late. They were all, worthless and worthy, treated in the same fashion; and, in theory, they all fared alike. In practice, however, the worthless fared much better than the worthy; for they did not care a whit with whom they lived, whereas, living with them, in close companionship too, was for the worthy a terrible trial, a source not only of endless annoyance and friction, but of bitter humiliation and shame. Old wastrels were therefore quite fairly comfortable in the House, while respectable old folk were wretched; and all the money spent on trying to make them happy was wasted.

That the Mayor, Mr. C. F. Simmons, knew, of course; it was at the root, indeed, of his trouble. For, being a humane man, a staunch economist to boot, he strongly disapproved of worthy old people having to live in misery; disapproved also of ratepayers' money being wasted. There was something wrong somewhere, he was sure, something that ought to be righted; and before very long he had firmly made up his mind to try to right it; nay, more, he was already hard at work trying to find out how the righting could best be done.

He had none too much leisure in those days; but, what he had, he gave up to going about among the poor, getting into touch with them, finding out what makes most for happiness among them, what most for misery. It was only among the respectable poor that he went; he left the whole wastrel tribe unvisited; for it was no hardship for them, he held, to go to the workhouse in their old age. And those whom he was bent on helping were those for whom going there was a hardship, old men and women who had been worsted in the fight, who were poor through no fault of their own, and who were striving hard to ward off destitution lest, if it came, go there they must.

Many old people who have some little savings are haunted by the fear that an end may come to their savings before an end comes to their lives, or before they can claim Old-Age pensions. Many who have seen better days cannot put the dread out of their minds, that worse days even than those they are having may lie before them, unless the Fates with their shears intervene. These people appealed to Mr. Simmons with special force; for not only are they miserable when they go to the workhouse, but the mere thought that they may have to go there is a real trouble to them, a ceaseless anxiety, years before they go, even if they go. And some of them never go. They stoutly refuse to go, even when face to face with the fact that not going may mean for them neglect, squalor, suffering, ending, perhaps, in something akin to a ditch. And they refuse not through any fear of ill-treatment in the workhouse, any fear of being left there on short commons; but, in nine cases out of ten, because, were they to go, they would have to pass their days and nights with those around them who would jar upon them at every turn, wound their feelings, outrage all their notions of what is decent; and that they feel they could not bear. Nor could they bear that their old friends and neighbours should see them living with these wastrels around them, on terms of equality with them.

It is bad enough to lose one's liberty, to be at the beck and call of officials, ' with a bell for this and a bell for that '; bad enough, too, to live in a huge mansion, when one has always lived in a cottage, and to eat with a crowd looking on. Still, all that is as nothing, in the eyes of many very worthy old men and women, compared with being housed together with rogues and vagabonds, ex-gay-ladies and the like, being placed on a par with them. That entails disgrace as well as misery, they feel, and is therefore an insuperable bar to their ever going to even the best of workhouses unless forced; or, if forced, to their ever being there even fairly comfortable.

Mr. Simmons soon realised that, if the lot of the respectable poor were to be bettered, they must be freed from all fear of having to go the workhouse ; he realised also that the only way of freeing them from that fear was to provide them with some other refuge. For many of them are alone in the world : they have no 'belongings,' or only 'belongings' with whom it is impossible for them to live. Thus they live alone, and there comes a time when living alone is a sorry business ; a time, indeed, to most, when it is practically impossible, when they must be somewhere where they have at any rate someone within hail to give them a helping hand, if needs be. And they who are alone-standing, as well as old and poor, have not much chance of being taken in to live with anyone, or of finding anyone to live with them. It is hard enough for them to find a room in which to live. Thus their little savings, if savings they have, are of no great use to them, when their strength fails them ; nor is out-relief, nor even an Old-Age pension of ten shillings a week. Go to the workhouse they must, unless they have some other refuge to which they can go : their only alternative is to live in squalor and die of neglect. Some other refuge they must have, therefore, he decided, although it was not easy at the moment to see where the money with which to provide it was to be found.

The refuge must entail no raising of the rates : that was a point on which he was determined. For he was keenly alive to the fact that rates press heavily on lower middle-class people, many of whom are very needy ; some, very poor, much poorer than some who rank as the Poor. It is from the lower middle-class, indeed, that the respectable aged poor are mostly recruited. And the refuge must be one in which old folk could feel quite at home, and go their own way, one to which they would betake themselves gladly, knowing that being there would be accounted to them an honour, not a disgrace. On this point also he was determined. That such a refuge could be provided, he was convinced ; and, after much brain-cudgelling, much sifting of estimates, conning over of plans, he had strong evidence wherewith to convince others not only that it could be provided, but that, when provided, it would effect great savings in money as well as in misery. He had, in fact, already succeeded in framing a scheme for the organisation and working of a refuge which, far from raising the rates, would actually lower them.

In the crusade he then started, the burden of his preaching was that to force decent old people to go to the workhouse was grossly extravagant as well as cruel, as a good half of what they cost the ratepayers while there was wasted. A poor toothless old woman is none the better for having hunks of beef, huge slabs of pudding, dealt out to her day by day; electric bells and uniformed officials yield her neither profit nor pleasure. And such things cost much money; whereas the things in which her heart delights, on which, if she be a decent old woman, her comfort hangs—having respectable people around her, being treated with kindly deference, being left to go her own way—cost no money at all. Moreover, whatever she costs in the workhouse falls as a rule entirely on the rates, no matter how many friends she may have who could contribute to her support; for they have no inducement to help her when once she is there. Even if she have relatives, they rarely contribute a penny unless they are forced; and the forcing is not easy. Were she, however, in a refuge, organised on the lines he proposed, it would be otherwise, he maintained; as then friends and relatives alike would have a strong inducement to help her; and she herself, already years before she was there, would have a strong inducement to husband any little savings she might have. He was able to prove that, in this refuge, the inmates would live in peace and comfort at less expense to their fellows than if they were living in the workhouse. It was for the sake of economy as well as humanity that the refuge must be built, he insisted. Thus he was in a strong position when he appealed for money wherewith to build it; and his appeal met with a generous response. The building was begun at once, the Duke of Devonshire providing the land on which it stands; and, before it was finished, there was enough money to pay for it already in the bank. At the present time not only is it free from debt, but it has an endowment fund to fall back upon of £4341. For its current expenses it is dependent on voluntary subscriptions.

The Home, or rather Homes—for every inmate has his or her own home—were started on a very modest scale: there were at first only rooms enough for sixteen inmates, while the applicants for admission numbered fifty and more. Almost as soon as the place was opened, however, the Rev. Herbert Alston, one of its most generous supporters, decided to add to it a wing as a memorial to King Edward; and in 1913 he added a second wing, as a memorial to his own sister, thus completing the building as it was originally planned. By that time Queen Alexandra, whose name the Homes bear, had begun to take special interest in them, owing perhaps to the fact that they are organised and worked on much the same lines as an Old Folks' Retreat at Fredensborg, near where her early days were spent. Every year she sends them help out of her Rose Fund; and from time to time she makes them presents.

The Alexandra Homes are on the outskirts of Eastbourne, within an easy walk of the streets where the working classes mostly live; and that is a great satisfaction to the inmates, as it enables them to pay visits to their old friends and neighbours, and thus keep in touch with the outside world. There are enough rooms there now for thirty inmates, as well as for the matron, and a nurse when one is required. Every room is nicely furnished; the chairs are all easy chairs, and the beds are beds which even the fretful find comfortable. Each inmate has his own room which is regarded as his private property, his home, and which he furnishes if he can; otherwise it is furnished for him. Married couples have two rooms, a bedroom and a sitting-room; and so have sisters, if they throw in their lot together. Then there is a fine large hall which is for the use of all the inmates; it serves as a church or chapel on Sundays, and a general recreation room on other days. There are also common kitchens, where such of them as choose may do their cooking; and various little verandas, where they can sit and bask in the sunshine.

The Homes have before them a flower garden; and behind them a large vegetable garden, where there is an allotment for every inmate who has both the wish and the strength to cultivate it. Beyond the flower garden is the Aerodrome, which is even to the very feeble a source of endless interest, excitement, and pleasure. Thus the thirty old folk who live there are very well housed, in pleasant surroundings, too; yet they are housed—a note-worthy fact—at less expense to their fellows than if they were housed in the workhouse.

The cost of building the Homes, the two wings as well as the original block, was £3000; and had everything been bought, instead of many things, including the land, being given, the cost of fitting them up, furnishing them, etc., together with the cost of the land, would have amounted, roughly, to £1000 more. The actual cost of the Homes as they stand was, therefore, £4000. Now, had this £4000 been borrowed, at 4 per cent., as it could have been at the time it was spent, the annual interest on it would be £160 a year; and that would practically be the rent of the Homes. Thus the thirty inmates are housed, so far as bare rent is concerned, at a cost of £160 a year; or £3 1*s.* 6*d.* a week, i.e. at a cost per head of, fractions apart, 2*s.* a week.

In addition to bare rent there are, of course, other expenses entailed by housing. The Homes must be kept in repair; and keeping in repair is a fairly costly business; so is rate-paying, and that too must be done. Then the place must be insured, its accounts must be audited, and its sundry expenses defrayed. Moreover, it is supplied with water; and, excepting in the private rooms, with gas. In 1920

		£	*s.*	*d.*
Repairs and maintenance cost	. .	20	8	10
Rates	,, . .	7	18	6
Gas and Water	,, . .	9	7	10
Insurance	,, . .	3	19	5
Printing and Stationery	,, . .	6	14	9
Sundry expenses	,, . .	2	9	11
Audit fee	,, . .	2	2	0
		£53	1	3

These additional expenses amounted, therefore, to £53 1*s.* 3*d.* for the year, or £1 0*s.* 4¾*d.* a week, i.e. to 8*d.* per head a week. Thus the full cost of housing, of rent together with the additional expenses, was 2*s.* 8*d.* per week. That is what each of the old men and women in the Homes actually cost, or rather would cost, had the money for building the Homes been borrowed instead of being given. And according to the 1920 Official Report, the full cost of housing in the average workhouse, in England and Wales, is 3*s.* 9¾*d.* Were the old people in the workhouse, they would therefore each cost in housing 1*s.* 1¾*d.* a week more than they cost in the Homes; and 1*s.* 1¾*d.* a week for one means £89 7*s.* 6*d.* a year for thirty. Thus, by their being lodged in these Homes, instead of in the average workhouse, a saving of £89 7*s.* 6*d.* a year is made in housing alone. And, as we shall see later, the saving in housing is but a small matter compared with the saving in official salaries, wages, etc.

The Alexandra Homes are under the control and direction of a committee, of which Alderman Simmons is the chairman; and they are managed by a resident matron, who is responsible to the committee for the well-being of all who live there. The committee decide who shall be admitted to the Homes; and, through the honorary visitors they appoint, they watch over those admitted, and try to make things easy and pleasant for them. Should any inmate interfere with the comfort of his fellow inmates, should he not conform to the few simple rules in force for the general welfare, or should he in any way demean himself unworthily, the committee have the right to send him away. For he is practically their tenant, as they charge rent for the Homes, one penny a week each; and this penny their tenants pay gladly as, by paying it, they retain their votes, all their privileges, indeed, as free citizens. This right to send away for misconduct has, however, never been used but once; for the inmates are all thoroughly respectable old people: that they must prove before they become inmates. The Homes close their doors inexorably against even 'speckled hens.' And very wisely; for were it otherwise, they would soon cease to serve their purpose, as those for whom they were built would not go to them gladly.

The Homes bar their doors also against chronic invalids, persons mentally weak or unsound, and persons in the receipt of poor relief. For they were never intended to serve as an infirmary, or a refuge for the destitute. From the first they have been reserved exclusively for those who, at the time of their admission, are strong enough to tend themselves, keep their own rooms clean, and who have some little means of their own, a proof of their thrift, of their having tried to lay something by against old age. They are housed, watched over, secured against neglect or ill-treatment; they are provided with a doctor, nurse, etc., if they are ill; but they are not 'just taken in and done for.' They are supplied with water; a certain amount of coal is given to them, enough, if they are very careful, to last them the year; and their corridors, public rooms, etc., are warmed and lighted for them. What else they require, however, either they themselves must buy or their friends must buy for them. No one is admitted to the Homes who has not an assured income large enough to pay for his food, clothing, and the lighting of his own room, until he receives his Old-Age Pension.

Although the Old-Age Pension law was not in force when the Homes were opened, it was already being framed; and under it a man or woman cannot claim a pension until he is seventy. He may, however, go to the Homes as soon as he is sixty-five; for the Committee are alive to the fact that, even then, the strength of the average worker has begun to fail him, and he can no longer compete in the labour market with men of twenty-five. Between sixty-five and seventy, indeed, is now the most critical time in the life of a working man—or woman—the time when most of all he needs a helping hand if he is to escape destitution, and with it the workhouse. Still, if he is respectable, hard-working and thrifty, the chances are he has some little savings at sixty-five, enough to pay for food and clothing, with a trifle over, during the five years he must wait for his pension; although not enough to pay also for his lodging, and the care he may need if he is alone-standing. Moreover, even if he has no savings, and that through no fault of his own, he is fairly sure to have some relative, friend, or former employer willing to guarantee the income required to secure him a home rather than see him go to the workhouse. For the respectable aged poor are rarely quite friendless, even if belongingless; and the income required is small. Before the war, in normal times, therefore, it was only 5*s*. a week for a single person, and 8*s*. for a couple. Now it is 10*s*. for a single person and 20*s*. for a couple. And the guarantee is only for five years at most, as an inmate is sure of his Old-Age pension at seventy. No single person with more than 20*s*. a week, or couple with more than 30*s*., is given a home.

The old people who are admitted to the Homes know practically that, when once they are there, there they will remain until the end of their days; and that is a great joy to them; it makes all the difference in life to them, indeed. The Committee have, it is true, the right to send away anyone who becomes a chronic invalid; but they never use it excepting in cases requiring treatment that cannot be given in the Homes; and, so far, there have been only four such cases. Should any of the inmates become too feeble to do their own house work they may, in return for a trifle, engage one of the more robust inmates to do it for them; or they may arrange with some friend or relative to come in and 'clean them up.' If they are ill, the matron sees to it that they are well cared for. If the illness is serious, she sends for their honorary doctor and a nurse. It is a rare thing, however, for either a nurse or any other paid helper to be required. For, old though they be, some of the inmates are still active; and they are very helpful to one another: the stronger among them give a hand gladly to the weaker, and even more gladly to the matron. They keep not only their own rooms clean, but also the corridors, staircases, windows, etc., while some of them work the allotments of their more feeble brethren, as well as their own—grow potatoes and vegetables for them. Excepting when they are ill, they all do their own cooking, of course; and, what they dearly love, if only for the chance it gives of haggling, their own marketing. Thus they have quite a busy time in a morning, a fact that makes for happiness among them as well as economy; and for economy it certainly makes.

The inmates of the Alexandra Homes are thoroughly well cared for; they are as well cared for and as secure against neglect and ill-treatment as if they were in the most costly of public institutions. For they have always within hail someone who can either give them help, if they need it, or summon help for them promptly. Yet, excepting a very kindly and most capable matron, there is not a single paid official there. The matron has, of course, someone who comes in and takes her place when she is not there, and who lends her a hand on very busy days. She has also a gardener for a few hours now and then, and a nurse whenever one is required. All the paid help she had, however, last year cost only £8; and her own salary, etc., amount to £73 17*s.* 4*d.*, with housing, lights and firing—£100 a year altogether at most. Thus these thirty old people are watched over, kept out of harm's way, and given what care they require at a cost of £108 a year; at a cost, that is, of 1*s.* 4½*d.* per head a week. And were they in the average workhouse they would each cost in officials' salaries, wages, uniforms, maintenance, etc., 5*s.* 11½*d.* a week; they would, in fact, cost there in officials alone 4*s.* 7*d.* per head a week more than they are actually costing in the Homes. And 4*s.* 7*d.* for one head for a week is £357 10*s.* for thirty heads for a year. £357 10*s.* is, therefore, the annual saving effected in salaries, wages, etc., by their being in the Homes rather than in the workhouse.

In addition to housing, care-taking, and doctoring the inmates are provided with coal; and that last year cost only £46 7*s.* 6*d.*, or 7*d.* a week per head. For coal, if bought by the truck, is bought at less than half the price at which it is bought, as the poor buy it, by the quarter. They receive presents, too, from time to time from those interested in them, little delicacies, when they are ill, extra coal, wood, etc. Still, all that is actually provided for them by the Committee as a committee is housing, doctoring, general care-taking, and coal. The doctoring costs nothing but thanks. Their food, clothing, and what else they require they provide for themselves out of their assured incomes, i.e. the yield of their own savings or the gifts of their friends, until they are seventy, and thenceforth out of their Old-Age Pensions.

Now, as we have seen, their housing, care-taking, nursing, and coal last year cost 4*s.* 7½*d.* per head a week, i.e. housing, 2*s.* 7½*d.*; care-taking, 1*s.* 4½*d.*; coal, 7*d.* Thus, until they are seventy, 4*s.* 7½*d.* a week is all that they each cost their fellows, as apart from their own friends and relatives; and not one penny of the 4*s.* 7½*d.* comes out of either rates or taxes. Even after they are seventy, all that they cost their fellows, tax-payers and rate-payers included, is 14*s.* 7½*d.* per head a week, i.e. 4*s.* 7½*d.* plus 10*s.* their Old-Age Pensions. And were they in the average workhouse, they would cost the ratepayers 20*s.* 3½*d.* per head a week. Were they in the Eastbourne Workhouse indeed, they would cost them 29*s.* 3*d.* per head a week; and were they in one in London, perhaps 36*s.* 9*d.* Thus every inmate who is under seventy costs his fellows 15*s.* 8*d.* a week less in the Homes than he would cost them were he in even the average workhouse; and every inmate who is above seventy costs them 5*s.* 8*d.* less. Supposing, therefore, that fifteen of the inmates are under seventy and fifteen above seventy, a clear saving of £832 a year has been effected by opening the Alexandra Homes. And, if the saving in money is great, the saving in misery is incomparably greater.

An old man who lives in these Homes was once asked if he were comfortable there.

'Comfortable!' he cried, with a joyful chuckle. 'Why, when I think of how it was where I used to be, it seems just like Heaven here.'

And what he said, many of his fellow inmates feel more or less.

A more contented set of old people it would be hard to find: I never heard one of them grumble, never met one who cherished a grievance. They are a happy set, too, in their way, as happy at any rate as it lies in their nature to be. Some of them, indeed, are quite wonderfully bright and cheery, considering what they have gone through in the past, and what, through age and infirmity, they have still to bear. And they are as they are, in a very great measure, because they have no fear now of ever having to go to the workhouse; because they know that come what may they will always have decent folk around them, will themselves always be treated as decent folk, with kindliness, consideration, respect. They are as they are, happy as the day is long some of them, because they have homes of their own where they can live their own lives, go their own way, buy what they like, eat what they buy, cooked according to their fancy; eat it in their own little rooms, too, with no prying eyes looking on. They are happy, too, because they feel themselves free men and women, not mere numbers, and because they have something to do, so long as they have the strength to do it, and feel, therefore, that they are of use in the world, of use to their fellows.

One of the saddest features of workhouse life is the uselessness of the old people who live there. They have nothing to do : day in day out they must sit there, as an old lady who was sitting there once said to me : 'Just waiting for the end to come.'

Now, had the Alexandra Homes never been built, the thirty old men and women who are now living there in great comfort would—the chances are many to one—be living in misery, while the ratepayers' burden would be even heavier than it is. Thus, were there such homes in every town, every district, not only would the respectable poor be very much happier than they are, but the ratepayers would be considerably richer. For economy's sake, therefore, as well as humanity's, such homes ought surely to be built with all possible speed in these lean kine days.

EDITH SELLERS.

REMINISCENCES OF THE YORKSHIRE MOORLAND.

BY A COUNTRY DOCTOR.

It has been said that the parson sees a man at his best, that the lawyer sees him at his worst, but that only the doctor sees him as he really is.

If that is the truth, as I think it is, I have only myself to thank if I cannot give a true picture of the life and character of the Yorkshire moorlander or, as the local phrase has it, moorpout (pout = pippit). During a long life spent in practice among this remarkable people I have had the fullest opportunity for becoming intimate with their life, their language, their ways of thinking, and their environment. And, though I make no claim to literary skill, I think that the book of my reminiscences, of which this paper is a forerunner—raven or dove—may be welcomed not only as an entertaining collection of Yorkshire stories, but as a faithful record of a phase of English life which is rapidly disappearing. Motors and railways have broken down the old isolation. Railways and schools are destroying the old speech. The old dialect words are more and more rarely heard. Local place-names are pronounced—and not only by railway porters—as they are spelt (Pumfret, for example, has become Pon-te-fract). The moral atmosphere of the great towns is, like the smoke of their chimneys, invading and obfuscating the life of the moorlanders. One hopes that some unforeseen good may compensate the obvious destruction, and regrets are proverbially vain, but it is difficult for one who has known and loved them to see disappear the characteristic speech and manners of what was the toughest and raciest breed of Englishmen, and make no effort to save them, at least, from oblivion.

The character of the Yorkshire moorlander is not perhaps superficially charming, any more than is the aspect of the moorlands on which he is bred. It is indeed a very close reflection of his natural environment, a bleak and exposed land where the hard, bony framework of the earth is but scantily clothed with soil. The climate is severe—'nine months winter and three months cold weather' was a moorpout's epigrammatic description of it.

Habitations are sparse, and the roads, bad at the best of times, are, in winter, frequently blocked with snow. I have many times had to put up my horse and trap several miles short of my destination and tramp it over snow-covered moors. In such a country the fittest who survive are the physically and mentally toughest and hardest, and these characteristics are accentuated by isolation and consequent in-breeding. Dwellers in towns, like stones in the pot-holes of a river-bed, have all their edges and peculiarities rounded off. On the moorlands there is so much elbow-room for everybody that individual eccentricities are fully developed, and the angles of character remain sharp and rugged. Ruggedness is perhaps the most prominent aspect of the moorlander's character. It takes the form of a directness of speech, and a hostility to 'furriners' and new-fangled ways, which the visitor from the south finds repellent at first contact, though on closer acquaintance he generally discovers and learns to value the virile honesty and generous warmth of heart which lie behind the rough exterior. The moorlander has a caustic tongue, which he uses on occasion without mercy. He is nimble in parry and thrust, and will chuckle for many a long day over a victory in the battle of tongues. 'Ah capped and larnt him '—'Ah put t'capper on' will be his phrase as he relates his exploit over the friendly glass and pipe.

A Yorkshireman with a fancy for dogs met a friend out for a stroll with a dog, evidently a new possession. After critical examination of the animal he remarked :

'It's a grand pup[1] ye've gotten.'

'Aye, 'tis,' was the reply.

'What dae ye want for it ?'

'Ten pund.'

'It's a hell of a price.'

'It's a hell of a dog,' replied the Yorkshireman and walked on.

I once asked a shrewd Yorkshire farmer his honest opinion of a neighbour of his, another farmer, who, though a prominent Churchman, was a time-serving hypocrite of the worst type. 'Whya, ye see, Doctor,' my friend replied, 'bottomly [at bottom] he's yan o' this soart. He'd gan to t'chetch, tak t'sacriment, then sharpen his knife on a tombsteean, and cut his oan muther's throttle.'

As an example of ready repartee I may quote what was told me of an old parson friend, now sleeping his last sleep in God's acre.

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[1] Pronounced short *oo* as in 'soot.'

One day he came across a farmer named Thackeray belabouring a donkey most unmercifully. He took him to task, expressing wonder that he could treat a poor dumb animal so cruelly. 'Don't forget, Thackra' (he concluded his rebuke), 'that it was on a donkey that Our Blessed Lord rode into Jerusalem.' 'Aye,' retorted Thackeray, 'an' if He'd bin on a lazy b—— like this, He would never have got there yet.'

An old Yorkshire widow—a tremendous 'character'—was being pestered by the deacon of a local chapel for a donation to the Circuit funds. He was notorious as a very keen and grasping man of business. He wound up his appeal thus: 'Noo, Mary, the Lord luvs a cheerful giver.' 'Aye,' riposted Mary, 'but he deeant luv a greedy takker.'

This deacon, with three or four other earnest members of the flock, conceived the idea of a house-to-house visitation and mission to bring back erring sinners to the fold. All went well until it came to old Mary's turn. After an explanation from them of their purpose, she rose to the situation at once. She carefully locked her kitchen door, and with the key safe in her capacious pocket, proceeded to rake up in turn some notorious sin and wickedness in the past history of each member of the mission. They had all been sinners and had become transformed into saints, on the same principle, I suppose, as poachers made the best gamekeepers. She had a very long memory and did not spare them. When they were 'fair maddled and mafted,' she finally allowed them to depart. But the mission came to an abrupt end.

The vicar of one parish, a former Cambridge don, walked into a parishioner's house and remarked, after the usual greetings,

'Featherstone, why do you never come to church?'

Featherstone: ''Cos I'm a Methody and allus gán to t'chapel.'

Vicar: 'What do you go there for? They don't teach sound doctrine.'

Featherstone: 'Mebbe not, but there's yan [one] thing they teach ye.'

Vicar: 'And what's that, pray?'

Featherstone: 'They teach ye to take yer hats off when ye gan into uther foak's houses.'

On occasion the Yorkshireman can be laconic enough. A young and conceited cattle-dealer, whose affairs were not too satisfactory, meeting at a sheep fair an old, hardheaded, and very successful member of the same calling, clapped him on the back and remarked in a patronising tone: ‘Hoo are ye gettin’ on, Broadwith?’ The old man turned round and, seeing who it was, fairly hissed out ‘Hoo am Ah gettin’ on? Thank ye, Ah’ve gotten on; an’ that’s mair than ye’ll ever deea.’

Occasionally speech is replaced by symbolical action. Another cattle-dealer, asked by a country squire his opinion of a well-known farmer in the neighbourhood, merely picked up a stray straw from the roadside and let it fall to the ground.

The figure known as meiosis is a favourite with the moor folk. ‘How are you to-day?’ I would ask a patient. ‘Ah’s nae warse’ (meaning that he was much better). ‘Ah’ve takken yer stuff and it’s doan me no hurt.’ My stuff was doing him a great deal of good.

The rough, biting speech of the ‘moorpout’ is the outcome and expression of his habit of mind. His active, vigorous brain has constantly to struggle with the hard facts of a nature which seldom smiles and seldom spares. Self-reliance, a keen eye for concrete actualities, toughness are the qualities which he respects. His independence is downright and uncompromising—as solid as the boulders of his native moorland. It challenges immediately the stranger, and especially the southerner who visits or settles in Yorkshire. Accustomed to the greater politeness of the south, he resents and deplores the Yorkshireman’s ‘terrible lack of good manners.’ When taken to task the latter becomes yet more aggressively independent and more forcible in his language. One, who by long residence both in Yorkshire and in the south was well qualified to judge, very aptly described to me the difference between the two. The Yorkshireman, he said, tells you to your face what he thinks of you, whereas the southerner will tell his best friend. Good manners are very delightful, and play a great part in the making or marring of a man, but they may cloak an insincerity and servility which are abhorrent to the Yorkshireman. The latter will tell you he knows quite well what ‘behaviour’ is, but before anyone is the recipient of Yorkshire politeness or hospitality he must be considered completely worthy of it. As a moorlander put it to me one day—‘Ah knaws what’s what. Ah knaws what things belongs, and Ah knaws behaviour. Ah owes nobody nowt and Ah tooches my hat to no man wi’out he desarves it.’ If many of the old Yorkshire squires are on terms of cordial familiarity with their servants, tenants, and poorer neighbours, it is precisely because they come of stocks in which long residence in the county has bred the qualities which the latter understand

and respect. Some of the old squires whom I knew were quite proud of their Yorkshire speech, and often talked it as broadly as anyone. One, a baronet, who unfortunately drank heavily, and was often carried to bed in a helpless state by one of my friends, was Chairman of the Bench of Magistrates in his district, but for a long time had dealt out justice in a ridiculously lenient fashion, carrying matters with a very high hand. At last his brother magistrates, tired of being ignored, held an indignation meeting, threatening to report him to the Lord Chancellor unless he mended his ways. He was very contrite, promising immediate amendment, but at the very first case which came before him soon afterwards completely forgot his promise. It was a double charge of assault and drunkenness. He pronounced sentence on this offender as follows : ‘ Noo then, for t'assault we'll fine ye a shilling an' costs. As for t'droonkenness, we'll say nowt aboot it, as we get droonk oorsells.’ This story recalls another. An habitual drunkard, taking stock of the Bench of Magistrates assembled to try his case, commented audibly to himself, ‘ Ah deeant care a damn for aud Pollard,’ naming one of them. Unfortunately the remark was overheard by old Pollard, who retorted ‘ An aud Pollard deeant care a damn for thee.’

Some sixty years ago a local squarson of autocratic temperament, who was the proprietor of all the land, the houses, the trees, the streams, the church, and everything appertaining to his village except the canopy of the sky, took to task, as he hurried to take the Sunday morning service, a villager who had long annoyed him by never attending church. ‘ You never come to church, Thwaite,’ he said angrily. ‘ Ah knaws that ; tellin' yan weeant mak onny better of t'job,’ replied the stubborn tyke. ‘ I will make you come to church,’ threatened the squarson. ‘ Thou weeant dae nowt o' t'soart, an' thou weeant mak' me gan to t'chetch.’ ‘ I will. If you don't come to church, I will turn you out of your cottage.’ ‘ Damn ye, Ah tell ye Ah weeant gan to t'chetch an naebody'll mak me,’ shouted Thwaite, as he turned his back on the parson, who strode on to the House of Prayer, full of holy wrath. He summoned the man the following week before the local court on the charge of using profane language, and the case came before the local magistrates—a famous sporting baronet and a retired army captain. Both these magistrates were very hard swearers themselves, and were much exercised in mind when they had heard the evidence. They secretly sympathised with the offender, and in their long consultation afterwards were delighted to find a way out. The baronet delivered judgment in the following terms: 'Now, Thwaite, you certainly used very bad language, but not profane language. If you had said "G—d damn you," that would have been profanity, but as you only said "Damn you," we dismiss the case.'

An old Yorkshire squire, a retired colonel, who was always busy poking about and seeing that his many retainers worked industriously in the station of life to which they had been called, was peering over a hedge and watching one of them, who was about as much of a character as himself, at work on the stone-heaps. Suddenly a large stone flew close past his head. 'Ashby! Ashby!' he angrily shouted. 'What the devil do you mean throwing big stones over the hedge like that? Do you know that nearly hit me on the head?' 'Oh! it's ye, is it, Conneril?' replied Ashby in a tone of great surprise. 'Whya, thems that's not favourable Ah allus exports and just chucks em ower t'hedge.'

The following story shows the Yorkshireman's independence carried almost to the point of moral anarchy! A new vicar had been appointed to a very remote moorland living. He was very broadminded, energetic, and anxious to be the father-confessor and consoler to all his parishioners, irrespective of sects and creeds. The Nonconformists, however, of whom there were many in the parish, held obstinately aloof, and would have no co-operation. Meeting one of the most prominent of them, an old sheep farmer, at supper one night, the vicar asked him point-blank why those of his persuasion did not give him a turn occasionally by attending the Parish Church. 'Whya,' was the explanation, 'it's like this: ye see at t'chetch ye mak' ower mich of t'ten Commendments, and we deeant reckon mich to 'em.' There were, it is true, occasional cases of sheep-stealing on those moors.

At its best the moorlander's vigorous independence is a quality which commands all respect; but it is apt to degenerate into a narrow exclusiveness, pig-headed stubbornness, and obstinacy in quarrel.

Of quarrelling—'threeapin' an' differin''—there was plenty. In old days a little blood-letting would have relieved the tension. But that safety-valve having gone out of fashion, the quarrelling was all the more bitter and relentless. My friends quarrelled in deadly earnest; they never forgave and they never forgot, and sometimes the feud went from father to son. They quarrelled over their grazing and sporting rights, over their sheep and stock, over trickery in bargaining, and of course over those old bones of contention—wills, religion, and money. A declaration of purpose made in the presence of witnesses had almost the force of an oath. Personal pride and honour were involved in its observance. I knew a country joiner who was an industrious, clever, and honest workman. One day high words unfortunately arose between him and the vicar over some work he had done on the church pulpit, and before witnesses he had expressed himself very assertively and emphatically about Church parsons. Shortly afterwards a new vicar was preferred to the living, who was a rich man and desirous of spending a large sum in repairs and alterations to the vicarage. He sent for my joiner friend and together they spent an hour over the contemplated work. To the vicar the man appeared strangely taciturn and almost absent-minded. In reality a terrible struggle was going on within him between self-advantage and self-pride, in which the latter eventually got the upper hand. When finally the vicar requested him to commence work at once, he fiercely turned round on him and hissed out: 'Ah sed—Ah'd—never—deea—a-nuther—job—for—a Chetch parson—an—Ah'll warrant ye Ah weeant. Good arterneean.'

Another example from my personal experience. George Ashby quarrelled with his life-long friend Robert Kays over a business transaction, and declared in the hearing of neighbours that he would never so long as he lived cross his threshold again. As time went on his feelings towards Robert underwent some softening, and inwardly, or 'bottomly,' as they say in Yorkshire, he would have liked to be reconciled. But his strong assertion about the threshold stood in his way. However, a resourceful friend of both parties suggested a golden bridge—Why not take up the threshold and afterwards replace it by a new one? The suggestion was accepted; the threshold was taken up, and George Ashby re-entered his friend's house after thirty years' absence.

The following story, which I have on excellent authority, is too characteristic to be omitted. Two brothers, William and John Bickerdike, quarrelled. How the quarrel arose does not concern us, but it was a very real and bitter one, and for forty years, though living in the same village and nearly opposite to one another, they completely ignored each other's existence. Both were men of some substance and position, bore excellent characters, and had many friends. These had made repeated efforts to reconcile the excellent fellows, but without success. They remained implacably hostile, hard as adamant or moorland boulder. One day John fell ill, took to his bed, and was soon like to die. The mutual friends were much distressed, and, putting their heads together, decided that one last effort should be made to reconcile the unforgiving brothers. William was first approached, and after some considerable hesitation said he 'was willin'.' John likewise hesitated, but in the end was also 'willin'.' So the brothers met, and the long silence of forty years was broken. Of course, no allusion was made to the quarrel, but they had quite an affecting talk of happy days spent together before it took place, of their old father and mother, and many interesting events. Finally, William hoped John would go straight to Heaven, and John in turn hoped he would meet William there when the latter's turn came. They shook hands warmly and bade farewell. But before he left the house William was hastily summoned back to the sick man's bedside. John had something very important to say. He found John sitting bolt upright in bed, whereas he had left him lying quite flat. 'Now, William,' said John very solemnly and impressively, an uplifted hand emphasising his words. 'Now, William, mind ye, if Ah get better, all this is for nowt.'

The Yorkshireman has great difficulty in owning himself to be in the wrong. Two ladies of my acquaintance, driving alone over the moor, met a man with a horse and cart, and had great difficulty in passing him on the narrow road. He became exceedingly rude and abusive, so much so that the ladies afterwards wrote a strongly-worded letter of complaint to the employer, whose name they had recognised on the cart. The latter wrote a most courteous letter in reply, promising that the man would come to apologise. When the carter arrived he was shown into their presence, and at once spoke as follows: 'Ah think ye war the two ladies Ah toad to gan to Hell t'other daay.' 'Yes, we were,' they replied. 'Well, ye've nae 'casion' was the very curt apology.

If individuals could be quarrelsome and obstinate, communities could be equally so.

One day, when the countryside was attending the weekly market at the little country town of Muxley, a terrible snowstorm and blizzard occurred. In a short time the roads were hopelessly blocked and the walls and hedges obliterated by snowdrifts. News reached a moorland village that its market people had stuck fast on the high moorland road, and that all their conveyances were more or less completely buried. A large rescue party was hastily formed and set off on its mission of salvation with the stalwart village blacksmith at its head. The very first man they found was the parson, who with his pony and cart was almost out of sight in a deep ditch. It happened at the time that this parson was in very bad odour with his parishioners. There had been much 'threeapin' an' differin',' and the parson was for the moment the most unpopular man in the village. The delight with which he hailed the appearance of the rescuers was, in consequence, not reciprocated. Moorland wit was not slow to recognise that here was a golden opportunity sent by the gods to more than square the long account. There was a hurried consultation, after which the blacksmith delivered the ultimatum of the party: 'Noo, bide theesen wi' patience an' lang sufferin', for thou's t'varra last man we sall dig oot. Thar's Lang Tom, Bill o' Sturrocks, Toldrum, Stubbins, Tommie wid t'Lads, and Tommie wid t'Lasses, an' a seet mair as are all wanted at heeam to milk t'coos, feed t'pigs, sarve t'calves, and tend t'sheep. Thar's Cobbler Jack has gotten sum mair leather, an' thar's Mary Harper wi' a seet o' groceries that'll be as wet as mook. Noo we deeant want thee till Sunday, so bide thaar till we've laated all t'rest.'

So the poor parson instead of being the first was the very last man to be rescued.

One more illustration of Yorkshire stubbornness. A moorlander, whose uncle had died in a distant workhouse, called on the vicar to arrange about the interment, which was to take place in the family grave in the old churchyard, and had been delayed for some reason. The man was by temperament a 'threeaper,' and his temper was not improved by being kept waiting for some time. It was in no amiable mood that he addressed the vicar. 'Noo then, we sall bring t'aud lad ten miles by t'road an' we reckin we sall be at t'chetch by three by t'clock or rather mair for t'sahdin' [burial] termorrow arterneean.' The vicar was not a man to be dictated to, and replied very decidedly: 'Oh! What about my convenience? You cannot have funerals just when you think fit.' 'We're noan partickler ter half an hour or mair,' suggested the moorlander. 'I cannot possibly take the funeral to-morrow afternoon,' was the uncompromising answer. 'Thou means thou weeant try an' mannish it. Ah tell thee, uther foalk can be ez meean ez mookment teea. Ah'll warrant ye we sall bring t'aud lad along in his box, an' if thou weeant hap t'job up, then we sall upend him agean t'chetch door, an' thou can sahd him whenever thou's a-mind.' With this the stubborn Yorkshireman strode away. The funeral took place at three o'clock the following afternoon without further ado.

Remoteness from railways and the necessity of wresting a livelihood from a niggardly soil condemned the moorlander to a life of assiduous labour. Many of my patients never wandered much farther than to the neighbouring market towns. Many of the housewives seldom went even so far. There were men who had never been in a train. An isolated existence makes for simplicity and the survival of primitive habits in thought and action. Though it was a sheep-grazing and stock-breeding country, some corn was still grown. The seasons were often dreadfully late. I remember in one moorland parish the Church Harvest Festival service, arranged for the usual late date, was held before a single stook of corn had been 'led.' I have seen a farmer bring his corn, stook by stook, up to December, into his kitchen to be dried before the fire. The steam-thresher rarely penetrated to these inaccessibilities, the horse roundabout thresher being still used, or in the smallest farms the old hand flail.

One day I caught up a 'moorpout' who was striding along the moorland road, and asked him after the health of his wife and daughter, whom I was attending. Without troubling to stop, he kept on at the same pace, answering my questions over his shoulder. This struck me as very rude and surly conduct, and a few days later I tackled him about it. His explanation was very simple. He was sexton of the moorland church, and it was his task to keep the clock in order. But he had no watch. He used to walk the eight miles over the moors to the nearest town every week to make his family purchases, and when ready to return would note the correct time of day by the post-office clock. From long experience he knew almost to a minute how long it would take him, going at a fixed pace, to reach home. The clocks of the dale were then set by this highly scientific method. They were notoriously correct.

I have touched on only a few—and those perhaps not the most endearing—traits of the moorlander's character. Many interesting details I could give of primitive habits of thought and primitive practices which survived in these out-of-the-way moorland farmsteads. I could say a great deal about the hospitality of my old friends, which was at times overwhelming in its massiveness, of their loyalty in friendship, and their indomitable energy and courage. But I have almost reached the limits of space allotted to me—perhaps also those of the reader's patience.

I will only add by way of tail-piece to my paper one saying—a thumbnail picture of the moorlander at close of day. One winter's evening I was enjoying a 'crack' and a pipe with one of my oldest patients. We were seated in his kitchen—dim but for the firelight and stray gleams from the oak-dresser and the crockery ranged thereon—and I had been asking him how he managed to while away the long winter evenings, when outdoor work was impossible. 'Ah sits and smoaks and thinks,' he said. 'Soomtimes Ah sits and thinks, and soomtimes Ah just sits.'

BEGINNINGS.

Literature, which is so much older than the printing-press as to be older than writing, still preserves as habit what it once employed as machinery. Rime was once a machine, the stanza a machine, rhythm itself, and certainly the exordium. It was found necessary, in what I must call *oral* literature, to begin with the bill of fare. When prose, from being oratory, became literature, another necessity was felt—that you must begin at the beginning, that is to say, with the soup. The two were used alternatively or, as we shall see, compounded, presented together; but it was reserved to days comparatively recent to introduce the *apéritif.*

To serve our own times I must vary the figure. As you look upon your novel—for what is left to literature now besides the novel?—as a chronicle or a symphony, so you will invite the reader on your first page—to listen to an overture, or to begin at the beginning. 'There was a man . . . dwelt by a churchyard': nothing could be better than that in the way of opening. It was the old way:

> 'Hit befel in the days of Uther Pendragon when he was Kynge of all England, and so regned, that there was a myghty duke in Cornewaill that helde warre ageynst hym long tyme.'

That is how the greatest of all romances begins—at the beginning; and yet it has in it the germ of the overture; for it gives you the things upon which romance depends, colour and the theme. It is not the epic manner, remark: there the convention is clear. In epic you begin with the theme. It is not for nothing that the 'Iliad' begins with a wrath, and the 'Odyssey' with a man. But romance, which breathes by colour, adds it to the theme, and so it is with the ballad.

> 'It fell about the Martinmas time,
> When the wind blew snell and cauld':

there, and in things like it, is the theme presented as colour. Some such thing, no doubt, was in Stevenson's mind when he held forth to a correspondent upon the necessity for a novel to 'begin to end badly,' or 'well,' as may be. He quarrelled with the happy opening of 'Richard Feverel,' if I remember rightly.

Well then, with the opening of the 'Morte d'Arthur' in our heads, here is its lineal descendant of the nineteenth century, in a brisk exordium:

'About thirty years ago, Miss Maria Ward, of Huntingdon, with only seven thousand pounds, had the good luck to captivate Sir Thomas Bertram, of Mansfield Park, in the county of Northampton, and to be thereby raised to the rank of a baronet's lady, with all the comforts and consequences of a handsome home and large income.'

As I say, brisk, business-like, crisp, epigrammatic. Colour is watered down to a question of the almanacs; theme is there, without being forced upon us. Yet it is entirely adequate to the matter in hand. In its way it is an overture, if only to a toy-symphony. It tunes us up. We stand upon the shore of an unknown sea, ready for the baronet's lady and all her sequelae. Miss Austen is, I consider, one of our best beginners. How admirable is that of 'Emma'!

Much had happened in the interval between Sir Thomas Malory and her. Among other things Defoe had invented the novel, and therefore, in a way, Miss Austen herself. He saw, however, no better way of doing it than to make a chronicle of it, which had been Sir Thomas's way too; but there was one vast difference between them. Both began at the beginning; but Sir Thomas used colour to enhance his tale, and Defoe to lower it. Sir Thomas would enchant you, lift you into 'realms of old'; Defoe would sober you down. Both used persuasion—literature is forever linked with cookery—but Sir Thomas would have you see reality as a dream, Defoe a dream as a reality. Here is Defoe at his best:

'I was born in the year 1632, in the city of York, of a good family though not of that country, my Father being a Foreigner of Bremen, who settled first at Hull . . .'

He runs on with his particularities: his mother's name Robinson, his father's Kreutznaer, and so on. That was Defoe's manner, which I suspect to have been derived from Cervantes. He had the same love of verisimilitude, and the same need of it though more daintiness in its employ:

'In a village of La Mancha, the name of which I have no desire to call to mind, there lived not long since one of those gentlemen that keep a lance in the lance-rack, an old buckler, a lean hack, and a greyhound for coursing.'

That is a much more literary, but not more artful manner than Defoe's, essentially the same. It is carefully compressed; Defoe's, with equal care, is diffuse. Both have had their followers. Defoe's has outlasted the greater man's. Meantime another style of narration had been discovered which I hope I shall be forgiven for calling the Cheap-Jack manner. The Cheap-Jack persuades by dazzle, by hypnosis. He has unlimited words at his tongue's end, and bemuses you with the flood of them. Rabelais is answerable for that:

'Most noble and illustrious drinkers, and you thrice-precious profligates (for to you and none else do I dedicate my writings), Alcibiades, in that dialogue of Plato's . . .'

and so on, and so on—for ever. And that also is Sterne's way of doing it. True, 'Tristram Shandy' begins at the beginning, and indeed at the very beginning—but with what chirping, with what prattle!

'I wish either my father or mother, or indeed both of them, as they were in duty both equally bound to it, had minded what they were about when they begot me . . .'

Tristram does not get himself born at that rate until the beginning of Chapter V, there being so much more of opinions than of life in his immortal memoir. With a book like that you have neither theme nor colour to predispose you to its perusal. You have curiosity, that only. I know people who have tried to read 'Tristram Shandy' for the story, to see what happened. And I know what did happen. 'Fratello, tu non voi esser inteso: io non ti voglio intendere—vai con cento diavoli.' That is how an Italian, according to Dean Church, treated an 'enigmatic prophet,' before throwing him into the fire. 'My dear man, you have no desire to be understood, and I no desire to understand you. Go to the deuce.' A good many novel-readers have bidden Sterne to the deuce; and I don't at all shrink from owning that I have never reached the end of 'Tristram Shandy'—or of 'Gargantua' either for that matter. The Cheap-Jack, in fact, must stand or fall upon his own gifts. If his kind of nonsense suits yours, well and good.

Fielding had not the patter for that way of opening. You may call his the arm-chair, port-and-walnuts way, and not be wrong. He had the passion for dissertation; he loved it for its own sake as well as his own; he must buttonhole the reader. That made him a bad starter, though not nearly so bad as Sir Walter Scott; both 'Amelia' and 'Tom Jones' begin at Chapter II, 'Tom Jones' hardly there. I think the appetite grew upon him with his growing facility. In 'Tom Jones' you have an overture to pretty well every chapter, asides and proscenium-appearances which really hold up the action. Thackeray, deriving very much from him, was nevertheless better at getting away with the thing. Nothing could be better than the openings of 'Vanity Fair' and 'Pendennis,' nothing more sententious and ambagical than the first chapter of 'The Newcomes,' which, however, is put into the pen of Pendennis himself, a first-class prig. In 'Esmond' you are, or ought to be, prepared for the easy circumlocutions of Sir Richard Steele—but except you are uncommonly quick on the uptake, you are *not* so prepared. As a consequence, 'Esmond' succeeds generally on a second perusal, and better and better as you re-read. But comparatively few there be of the ordinary run of readers who find it again after the first rebuff. Dickens was an excellent starter, using many manners, mostly well. 'The kettle began it,' is not a happy instance. That is a bang on the drum, like a showman's at a fair. But what could be better than the beginning of 'Dombey and Son'?

'Dombey sat in the corner of the darkened room in the great arm-chair by the bedside, and Son lay tucked up warm in a little basket bedstead, carefully disposed on a low settee immediately in front of the fire, and close to it, as if his constitution were analogous to that of a muffin, and it was essential to toast him brown while he was very new.'

Allowing for Dickens's weakness for far-fetched images, that is as good a formula as you could want for the beginning of a novel. Theme and colour both there. The next paragraph is quite as good, and the whole chapter keeps it up. What is especially artful about it is that, while it is beginning at the beginning in the good old way, it is also an overture, according to new doctrine. Others followed him hard—Charles Reade, Wilkie Collins, Walter Besant, and the smaller fry.

'She went into the garden to cut a cabbage to make an apple-pie. And while she was there . . .'

From the genius to whom that opening was revealed come Henry James and all the modern novelists, 'so many and so many and such glee,' who begin their books in the middle—Mr. Conrad and a countless host. Mr. James did not hit upon the device until the *mezzo cammin* of his mortal career, and, as some would have it, at the end of his immortal. 'The Portrait of a Lady' begins with a dissertation about tea, very much as 'Tom Jones' with one about things in general. But later on we come to 'She went into the garden,' or even to '*So* she went into the garden,' which is to take a very high line with the reader. I neither accuse nor defend. All that I am concerned to say about it is that, beginning in the middle, he was generally skilful enough to avoid the explicit harking-back which others have not been able to do—to their detriment, I think. For see what happens. If the middle of the story is the beginning of the novel, the beginning of the novel will be the middle of the story; and what then becomes of form, which all discuss and none understand? I don't pretend to admire the formula anyhow, and have never been tempted to adopt it. You gain very little by it, and lose inevitably much. Mr. James became its bond-slave at the last, wound himself in webs of explication which involved him ever the deeplier. I dare say he did it as well as it could be done—but was it worth doing? I doubt it.

Lastly, you can begin at the end. Mr. De Morgan did that once. His hero, the teller of the tale, is on his death-bed when the scene opens. That dismal fact haunted me. The tale was long. 'He'll never last out, poor wretch,' was always at the back of my mind as I read on.

But here is enough of novels. *Per correr miglior' acque,* for a moment.

I began with prose, and shall end with it, but wish to say a word about epics while it is in my head. It is quite true that the practice of Homer, to begin strictly with the theme, has been observed in Europe from Apollonius Rhodius, through Virgil, and the Italian sugar-baker epopœists—of whose openings Tasso's full-sounding line

'Canto l' armi pietose, e' l capitano'

is much the best—through the mock-epics down to the parlour-epic of Cowper—

'I sing the sofa.'

It has been followed, I take it, for the plain reason that there is no better way of beginning a really great piece of work than by telling yourself and the rest of the world just what you are going to do. But the absence of colour, the avoidance of all pretence to an overture, must have some other reason—which I suppose to be this, that the Epic has been and has remained a classical composition, making no attempt at spheral music, having neither space, time, nor inclination for it, depending wholly on character and plot. Even in modern, romantic times, even when built upon romance, as most of the confectionery epics were—Boiardo's, Pulci's, Ariosto's—the rule has held. I am not ready to admit that the 'Chanson de Roland' is the exception which it seems to be. That, as we have it, is an epic fragment. Nobody can be sure how it began, except that it was not as it begins now. The invocation of the muse, another convention of the Epic, is a piece of piety, archaistic or not, with which I don't at all mind confessing my sympathy.

Mock-epics may doubtless be reckoned by fifties (mostly, I hope, in caves), but at the moment I can only remember two, and have the same fault to find with each of them. Tassoni begins his 'Secchia Rapita' in the regular way—

> 'Vorrei cantar quel memorando sdegno,
> Ch' infiammò già ne' fieri petti umani
> Un' infelice e vil Secchia di legno. . . .'

But what an extraordinary blunder of his, to let down his whole comic apparatus in the third line of the poem, and (so to speak) kick the bucket before he has begun! If you wished to pull the thing off I don't see how you could treat the bucket too ceremoniously. It is the pivot of your plot, without which you have nothing to say. But I don't myself think that Tassoni did pull it off. Pope, on the other hand, certainly did, though he made it more difficult by just the same too early disparagement of his theme:

> 'What dire offence from am'rous causes springs,
> What mighty contests rise from trivial things,
> I sing. This verse to Caryl, Muse! is due:
> This ev'n Belinda may vouchsafe to view:
> *Slight is the subject*, but not so the praise,
> If She inspire, and He approve my lays.'

What an ineptitude, when the slightness of the subject was the very opportunity of the poem! Then we come to Cowper and 'The Task.'

'The Task' is not a mock-epic, though it is a good deal more amusing than either of those I have just looked at. Part of its humour consists in the employment of heavy machinery for a light purpose—as if you should use a Nasmyth hammer for pounding sugar, or a steam roller for a cider press; and it is just possible that his word of extenuation is noticeable. If it is noticeable it is wrong—that's certain. I must now give the exordium:

> 'I sing the sofa. I, who lately sang
> Truth, Hope, and Charity, and touch'd with awe
> The solemn chords, and with a trembling hand,
> Escap'd with pain from that advent'rous flight,
> Now seek repose upon an humble theme;
> The theme though humble, yet august and proud
> Th' occasion—for the Fair commands the song.'

What a gentleman Cowper was! There is no other way of appraising the mastery and courtliness of that beginning. The next paragraph is exactly right:

> 'Time was, when clothing sumptuous or for use,
> Save their own painted skins, our sires had none.
> As yet black breeches were not; satin smooth,
> Or velvet soft, or plush with shaggy pile:
> The hardy chief upon the rugged rock
> Wash'd by the sea, or on the grav'lly banks,
> . . . .
> *Fearless of wrong*, repos'd his weary strength.'

Surely, a masterpiece of serio-comic writing. The more one reads of Cowper the more one loves him.

'Nothing shows up a bad sonnet so well as to imagine a church built on such lines.' I am reminded of that saying of Renan's by coming naturally to Wordsworth and his way of opening a great poem, and recollecting the figure which he used to describe his, borrowed from architecture, not from music. 'The Recluse' he said was to have been conceived of as a 'Gothic Cathedral,' of which 'The Prelude' might be considered as the 'ante-chapel.' It is calling one a symphony and t'other an overture in other words, and distinguishing the work from Epic. 'The Recluse' was certainly not an epic. The subject of it was much too subtle for epic treatment. But it was of epic proportions. One book of it, the only one we have, is of 9000 lines: 'The Prelude' is of 7000. Whether you pound upon the theme or not by way of opening, whether you stand in an ante-chapel and look before you into the soaring immensities of a nave; whether your mind is prepared by solemn organ-tones, or the shrilling of a trumpet—whatever or whichever you do, I cannot allow that Wordsworth did fairly by a poem which was designed to be the longest, if not the weightiest, in our tongue when he began 'The Prelude' by a remark about the weather—

> 'Oh, there is blessing in this gentle breeze'!

But to return to prose, and sum up this curious matter, one would say that, for a great book, a significant prelude, some 'music of preparation and awakening suspense,' was required. But, to judge by examples, it would seem that it is not so. There is Gibbon. If ever a man felt the solemnity of dedication to a life's work, took up the yoke, knew the touch of the live coal, heard the voice saying 'Write,' it was Gibbon. He has told us himself how and when he learned what his task was to be. But how placidly he sets out the counters on the board—like an old woman going to play draughts!

> 'In the second century of the Christian Era, the Empire of Rome comprehended the fairest part of the earth, and the most civilised portion of mankind. The frontiers of that extensive monarchy were guarded by ancient renown and disciplined valour. The gentle, but powerful, influence of laws and manners had gradually cemented the union of the provinces. Their peaceful inhabitants enjoyed and abused the advantages of wealth and luxury. . . .'

It is a mild, though an adequate, beginning to a work which was (and he knew it) to assure him immortality. Yes, it is 'adequate'—but for one word, the word 'abused.' He should have left that out. No doubt the Roman citizens did abuse their advantages—Gibbon is there to say so—but do you, should you, beg the question of your whole twelve volumes in the first paragraph of the first of them? I cannot think it.

Try another. Here is the beginning of 'Travels in Arabia Deserta,' a great book, done with a great gesture:

> 'A new voice hailed me of an old friend when, first returned from the Peninsula, I paced again in that long street of Damascus

which is called Straight; and suddenly taking me wondering by the hand, "Tell me (said he) since thou art here again in the peace and assurance of Ullah, and whilst we walk, as in the former years, toward the new blossoming orchards, full of the sweet spring as the garden of God, what moved thee, or how couldst thou take such journeys into the fanatic Arabia?"'

Mr. Doughty is employing a machine, somewhat worn down in these days, the machine of the inquiring friend and the long recital—the machine, indeed, of 'The Arabian Nights.' Yet it is a beautiful prelude; and it is all the prelude. The next paragraph plunges into the middle of the beginning, and we are off into the dangerous wild. I repeat, a beautiful prelude; but to end I will cap it with a better—Kinglake's to 'Eöthen':

'At Semlin I still was encompassed by the scenes and sounds of familiar life; the din of a busy world still vexed and cheered me; the unveiled faces of women still shone in the light of day. Yet, whenever I chose to look southward, I saw the Ottoman's fortress—austere, and darkly impending high over the vale of the Danube—historic Belgrade. I had come, as it were, to the end of this wheel-going Europe, and now my eyes would see the splendour and havoc of the East.'

'The splendour and havoc of the East.' I cannot dig from my memory or find in my library a more fitting prelude to adventure, or a more infallible bar of music upon which to open the pages of a good book.

MAURICE HEWLETT.

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BOOK - NOTES

IT is curious, in view of the outstanding importance of the office of Prime Minister in the practical constitution of the State, that no continuous record has been printed of the history, character, works, and influence of the ministers who in turn have occupied that high position. The omission is to be supplied by the Hon. Clive Bigham, who, in a volume entitled THE PRIME MINISTERS OF BRITAIN, fills the need, beginning with Sir Robert Walpole in 1721 and concluding his volume with Mr. Lloyd George in these days of grace, after just two hundred years. Here is provided one of those sidelights of political history which prove so often revealing and illuminating.

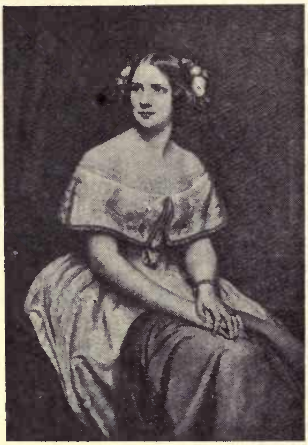
WILLIAM PITT

AMONGST the true things said by Bishop Gore in his new work, BELIEF IN GOD, is this: "The war and its experiences appear to have done a great deal to deepen doubts of the reality of divine love on the moral government of the world. It has weakened the liberal faith in progress without strengthening the faith in God. In the case of the most serious it has left them perplexed; in the mass it has weakened idealism and deepened cynical materialism. Certainly on the whole it has left the youth ot the country widely and deeply alienated from the Church and from organised religion." That the seed sown by Bishop Gore in his new book has fallen on fruitful ground is proved by the immediate great success of his book. Already a third large impression has been called for.

IN his time Mr. Horace Hutchinson has played many parts. As a great golfer, as a writer of romance, as one of the most genial spirits in social life, he has won tributes. He is also a thinker. He has written a book, THE FORTNIGHTLY CLUB, in which, in the form of debates amongst a coterie of friends, he treats of certain problems which have risen in these later days. There is, he claims, one hypothesis only on which the purpose of Evolution can become in any sense intelligible, and that is that it is designed to produce a creature capable of receiving influences other than those which come to us through the sense organs and nerve channels that are common to all except the very lowest animals. This capacity and its exercise he calls "human spirituality." Students of Auto-Suggestion and the other scientific isms of the hour had better hurry to get Mr. Hutchinson's book—and not they only.

BOOK-NOTES

IN recent years there has been an enormous extension of interest in music, unquestionably largely due to Sir Thomas Beecham's operatic ventures in London, Manchester, and elsewhere. Therefore, a willing audience is assured for the new volume of INTERLUDES, generally upon music, which Sir Charles Villiers Stanford has written. Amongst the papers comprising the volume are essays on "English Orchestras and Conductors," "Beethoven's Ninth (Choral) Symphony," on "Recent Tendencies in Composition," and—not least attractive—upon "Some Amateurs." Sir Charles has proved himself a musician of the front rank, wielding an effective baton and a stimulating pen.

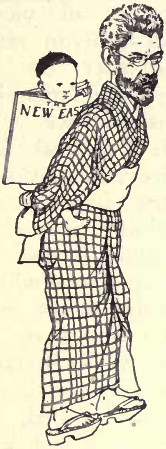

JENNY LIND

THE more that present-day questions, so far as concern international politics, are examined, the more necessary it is to study the conditions and experiences of the later Victorian years. In the Near East especially, so many modern difficulties seem to have resulted from the wise, or the unwise, actions of the European statesmen in those days. THE DIPLOMATIC RECOLLECTIONS OF SIR HENRY ELLIOT will be found usefully revealing, at least in certain aspects of the Near East; for Sir Henry was our Minister in Turkey in the days of the Bulgarian atrocities, and the good and great work he did at that time has, from causes partly revealed in the Introduction to the book, been overloked. The volume was written after his retirement in the 'seventies and printed privately. The time elapsed since then has by no means staled—indeed, has accentuated—the interest of these Recollections.

DR. WARRE was a great headmaster; and not only Etonians will be anxious to read the Biography of him, which that well-known and popular historian, Mr. C. R. L. Fletcher, has written. Dr. Warre's life throughout was full of constructive energy: an oarsman, a volunteer, a student of military science, a horticulturist, an agriculturist—he was still more an effective influence for personal good at Eton, the greatest of schools.

THE *Daily Mail* has shown a prompt appreciation of Mrs. Barnett's great tribute to her husband, as is shown in its enthusiastic review: "It is a book which breathes the spirit of hope and comradeship. Barnett always liked the poor better than the rich. 'We must have our own likings,' he said, when as a young man he turned away from dinner parties. The hearts of the givers, he admitted, might be all right, but he was 'wearied by their affectation, their unreality.' He was often wearied, too, by the society of other clergymen. 'They might be a lot of parsons,' he wrote, after he had been with a party of high-brow agnostics."

BOOK-NOTES



The New East

In view of the Washington Conference emphasising the position in the world of Japan and of our obligations of alliance with that wonderful people, it is very necessary to study the Japanese more and more — to realise their characteristics, national and personal; to judge the part they played in the history of the last century; and to estimate their power and influence in the present and the future. Mr. J. W. Robertson Scott—who before he went to Japan five years ago was well known in this country for his books on agricultural questions—has just returned after living in and travelling that island kingdom from north to south. His book will be entitled The Foundations of Japan.

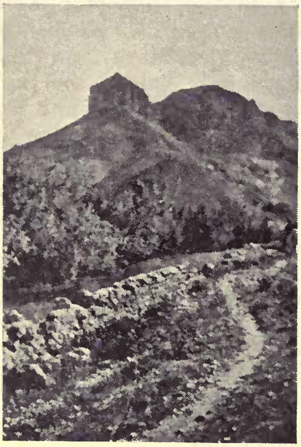
Another work it is well to look at, if it has not been read already—and it is possible that the many distractions of the war have caused it to be a good deal overlooked—is Ghenko, by Mr. Nakaba Yamada, describing the Mongol Invasion of Japan. The author says that he was led to write this volume through reading Kingsley's "Westward Ho!" and recognising then the great similarities between our Spanish danger, through the Armada, in the reign of Elizabeth, and the Mongol Invasion of his own country in the thirteenth century. It makes a record of deep interest, especially nowadays, and shows that the heroic spirit—the Samurai spirit—of Japan is of more ancient origin and brightness than many had imagined. Mr. Yamada prints a translation of the dramatic song, in which the defeat of the Mongols is celebrated :—

Heaven grew angry, and the ocean's
  Billows were in tempest tossed;
They who came to work us evil,
  Thousands of the Mongol host,
Sank and perished in the sea-weed,
  Of that horde survived but three.
Swift the sky was clear, and moonbeams
  Shone upon the Ghenkai Sea.

There have been laureates who have written worse.

Once again the January number of the *Quarterly Review* will be found of catholic and wide-reaching quality. Literature and politics have the chief place in the pages of this number: an appreciation of Austin Dobson, by Mr. Edmund Gosse; an essay on the "Works in Prose and Poetry of W. E. Henley," by Mr. John Drinkwater; the continuation and conclusion of Mr. Haines's stimulating paper on "Shakespearean Research"; a tribute to the late Sir David Henderson, by Mr. John Buchan, are amongst the literary and personal contributions. There will be also articles upon "River Control in Mesopotamia," on "Abyssinia," on "Political Demonology"—this with particular reference to the recent writings of Mrs. Nesta H. Webster. Those are but a few of the articles in what promises to be a number of unusual excellence.

BOOK-NOTES



Hill of Panj Mand

AMONG the early volumes of this year which promise to be of exceptional interest is a record written by Captain L. V. S. Blacker of his experiences in Turkestan between the years 1918 and 1920, after some highly honourable experiences on the Western Front. With a platoon of Guides, Captain Blacker penetrated to unknown parts of Turkestan, and has written a book of uncommon interest, as he explored a district of which very little is known by the people of this country.

THE serial by Sir George and Lady Scott in The Cornhill is about to be published in book form. The Green Moth is a talisman of jade, cut in that shape, and the occasion of much romantic adventure in Burma, of which country, through his official connection there, Sir George Scott knows more than pretty well anybody else. Perhaps Lady Scott will be better recognised under her former name of G. E. Mitton, which has appeared upon the title-page of many stimulating and valuable books of fiction and of fact.

THE CORNHILL for February will contain, besides the continuation of Ovington's Bank by Stanley J. Weyman, an article of special interest in view of the Gilbert and Sullivan revival, The W. S. Gilbert of His Own Letters. These gleanings from his correspondence with the authors, H. Rowland Brown and Rowland Grey, display not only his wit, but the friendly side of his character, hidden beneath his public show of pugnacity.

Bennet Copplestone will contribute a further article in the second series of The Salt Blood of England—An Attempt at Repetition—showing how the successors of the Elizabethan seamen failed, without a new Drake, to repeat what Drake had done.

Hunter's Luck, by H. Hesketh Prichard, will appeal to the lover of sport.

General the Hon. Sir Neville Lyttelton, G.C.B., writes on Purchase in the Army and its Abolition. He is one of the few surviving officers who entered the Army under that pernicious system.

MR. ASQUITH'S spirited defence of Lord Kitchener again brings Lord Esher's recently published book, The Tragedy of Lord Kitchener, into prominence. The book is now in its Sixth Impression.

These books are published by Mr. Murray, *and may be obtained from any bookseller. Mr. Murray will be glad to send his* Quarterly List of New Books *to any reader of* The Cornhill Magazine *on request being made to him at* 50a *Albemarle Street, London,* W. 1.

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